BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

№ 464

No 464

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

Theological Inquirer.

VOL. IV.

(NEW SERIES.)

Keep your Mind always open to receive Truth, and never set Limits to your own Improvement. Be always ready to hear what may be objected even against your favourite Opinions, and those which have had longest Possession of your Assent. And if there should be any new and uncontrolable Evidence brought against these old or beloved Sentiments, do not wink your Eyes fast against the Light, but part with any thing for the Sake of Truth. Remember when you overcome an Error you gain Truth; the Victory is on your Side, and the Advantage is all your own.

DR. WATTS.

LIVERPOOL:

Printed by F. B. Wright, Castle Street.

SOLD IN LONDON, BY TEULON AND FOX, 67, WHITECHAPEL; AND MAY BE HAD OF THE BOOKSELLERS IN GENERAL.

1828.

Devonport
Unitarian
Library

C861
n.s v.4

PREFACE.

THE Public are now presented with the Fourth Volume of the New Series of the Christian Reflector.

The Editor takes this opportunity of returning his thanks to his Subscribers and Correspondents. To the Communications of the latter he feels himself indebted for many valuable papers contained in the present Volume, and solicits a continuance of their Correspondence.

Arrangements are made for the regular supply of an article to be entitled "Biographical Sketches of Nonconformists." The design of which, is, to revive the memory of men who sacrificed every thing at the call of God and Conscience, and to give the Dissenters of the present day an opportunity of becoming acquainted with

17053

the principles of Dissent, and, should it ever be required of them, to be prepared to follow the example of those, who in their day were burning and shining lights, and of whom it may with justice be said, that the world, or the age in which they lived, was not worthy.

The Editor will be glad to receive Communications from any and all parties of Christians which they may deem worth publishing to the world. Nor shall objections to Christianity be refused admission into the pages of the Christian Reflector, provided they are couched in language which is required from every man who wishes to gain the attention of the public.

Liverpool, December 1*st*, 1828.

A GENERAL INDEX

Of Names and Subjects.

A

American Unitarianism, 27, 29
A new Unitarian Church in Boston, 210
Ordination at New York, 215
Unitarian Association at Boston, 216
Appeal to Reason, 39
American Publications, Extracts from, 122, 123

B

Blasphemy, 9
Bible Contest, 243, 251
Burgh's (Dr.) Syllogisms, 168

C

Commentaries on the Book of Common Prayer, 17, 52, 57, 105, 129, 153, 202
Consolation, 56
Cobbett's History of the Reformation, 144
Correspondence, (Mr. Thom's) with the Presbytery of Glasgow, 149
Curious Relic, 169
Cross of Christ, the true, discovered, 233
Correspondence, 24, 48, 72, 96, 120, 144, 166, 190, 214, 238, 262, 278

D

Dialogue between a Country Clergyman and a Quaker, 22, 36, 73, 119, 145, 183, 207, 228
Drunkenness, Essay on, 254, 275
Deity of Jesus Christ, 81, 132
Discovery of the True Cross of Christ, 233

E

Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of England, 259, 280
Extracts from American Publications, 122, 123

F

France, Religious Prospects in, 71

G

Greatness and Power, 235
God is Every Where, 268
Greatness, True, 269
Gospel Luminary, Lines from, 261

H

Holy Relic, (A) 84

I & J

Illustrations of Passages of Scripture, Prov. xx. 14, 16. Matt. xxvi. 24. 87. Matt. xxii. 11. The Prize Fighter and Racer at the Ishmian Games, 239 Psal. cxxi. 6. 239. Deut. xxvii. 11. 249. Hebrew, xi. 37. 38. 273.
Intelligence, Methodist Inquisition 29. Third Anniversary of Greengate Congregation, 31. Removal of Ministers, the Revds. J. Taggart, Mardon, and Bakewell, 34. Course of Lectures, Moor Lane, Bolton, 56. Anniversary of the Congregation, Moor Lane, Bolton, 104, 124. Somerset and Dorset Association, 125. Annual Meeting of Independents at Bridport, 126. Election of Rev. W. Gaskell to Manchester, 126. F. B. Wright's Lectures on Unitarians and Unitarianism, 126. Lancashire and Cheshire Provincial Meeting, 170 Anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 170, 185. Unitarian Meeting at Risley, 173. Anniversary of the Methodist Unitarians, 174. Test and Corporation Acts, 175. Presentation of a piece of Plate to the Rev. C. Berry, of Leicester, 176. Anniversary of the Western Unitarian Association, 222. Pastoral charges, 223. Nonconing Methodists, 223. Early fruits of the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, 223. Dr. Philipps. Mr. John Wright, testimony of respect to, 270. Synod of Ulster, 189, imposes a test, 193. Mr. Blakeley's speech, 193.
Inspiration of the Scriptures, 41, 65, 86, 111, 136, 160

L

Lectures on the Apostles' Creed, Remarks on, 13, 30

Lines to the Memory of Robert Taylor, M. D. 148
—— from the Gospel Luminary, 261

M

Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, 240

N

Natural History, the Spider, 25, 54, Garden Spider, 97, the Beaver, 180, 218

O

Obituary, Mr. W. Belsham, Rev. W. Broadbent, Rev. Dr. Poynter, Rev. Joseph Dunn, 31, Mrs. R. Wright, 176, Dugald Steward, Esq. 219, the Archbishop of Canterbury, 219, Mr. John Wright, 220
Orthodox Sagacity, 63
———— Impartiality, 157
———— Rancour, Rant, and Dr. Raffles, 262
Origin of Pagan Rites incorporated with Christianity, 96

P

Poetry, Horace Bk. iii. Ode 1, imitated 32, Sacred Lyric, 32, Elijah's interview with God, 79, Religion, 80, Devotion, 126, The Burden of Babylon, 150, The Exile at Rest, 224, On the Death of a Father, 271 Ode to Charity, 287
Price of the Toll-gate on the other side of Purgatory, 169
Pious Donations, 64
Priestly Claims, 85
Plagiarism of Dr. A. Clarke, 237
Power and greatness. 235

Q

Query on the title "Son of God," 135
—— Why are the Wicked compared to Goats? 226

R

Reading Club, a Village, 40
Religion at Naples, 49
Religion and Reason, 61
Religious prospects in Frace, 71
Review, Mr. Thom's Pamphlet, 99, 109, 146
Relic, A Holy, 84
Remarks on the Introductory Chapters of Matthew's Gospel, 177
Religious Errors, (Popular) 201, 224, 282
Religious Liberty, and Catholic Liberality, 268
Religious Policy, 241
Religious Tests, 247
Religious Bigotry, 261

S

Synod of Ulster, anti-christian, 189
————Imposes a Test, 190
————Opposed by an excellent Speech delivered by the Rev. F. Blakely, 193

T

Test and Corporation Acts, 74, 101
Tribute of Respect to the Rev. W. Porter, 76
———— to the late Mr. John Wright, 279
True Greatness, 269

U

Unitarianism in the East Indies, Letter from Mr. Adams, 199
———— in America, 27, 29
Unitarians, want of Zeal among them complained of, 284

Z

Zeal, want of, among Unitarians, 284

An Index of the Signatures of Correspondents.

Alpha..... 131
C..... 179
Catholic, A..... 235
Elvira..... 288
Eusebius..... 13, 247
Omicron..... 63, 84
Philalethes..... 238, 268
Philomath..... 242
Philo James..... 203, 226, 284
Purgator.. 22, 54, 61, 131, 157, 207
Servetus..... 15, 35
Theophilus..... 87
W..... 221
X..... 287

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

No. 37, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d.* JANUARY 1, 1828.

BLASPHEMY.

In the whole of the orthodox vocabulary, there is not, perhaps, a more undefined term than that of Blasphemy. It is a term of reproach in the superlative degree, and is used by bigots, when all other terms of reproach fail. It is applied to the man who dares to question the divine right of a pretended Christian Priesthood, or the divine right of Tithes to maintain such a Priesthood. To say that the doctrines of the Athanasian Creed are not only false, but, at the same time, ridiculous, is with some held to be Blasphemy. To deny the doctrine of the Deity of the Prophet of Nazareth, is with the Trinitarian, Blasphemy. So it is to deny the doctrine of the two natures in Jesus of Nazareth—the incarceration of the Deity—the humanizing the infinite and only immortal Spirit. To deny the death of God—the exhibition of the fountain of life—the creator of all worlds, on a Gallows, suffering in his body and mind all the torments of the damned, and, according to Mr. Hervey, more than an eternity of such torments; is sufficient to brand a man as a Socinian, a Blasphemer; and, to sum up all in one word that concentrates all that is, or that can possibly be conceived of evil personified—A Unitarian.

That the vulgar, the unlettered, the unthinking of the orthodox school should give the name Blasphemy to the doctrines maintained by Unitarians, is not much to be wondered at, they do as they are taught; on them we can cast the smile of pity, that of contempt belongs to their ministers, who style themselves their superiors: but when men of learning, whose education has

cost vast sums of money, who pride themselves on academical honours, display such gross ignorance, mixed up with such unchristian uncharitableness, it is difficult to say what epithet is the most apposite to be applied to them and their conduct— Surely when the reverend divines retire from the pulpit, from which they have denounced the Unitarians as God denying Apostates, and Blasphemers, and by accident take up their school books, the blush must crimson their cheeks, unless their habits of vice have completely banished the sense of shame.

On the subject before us, we beg to recommend to our readers the following remarks of Dr. Campbell, who though not a Unitarian, was a learned and excellent theologian. The learned Doctor says: —

No errors concerning the divine perfections can be grosser than those of polytheists and idolaters, such as the ancient pagans. Errors on this, if on any subject, are surely fundamental. Yet those errors are never in holy writ brought under the denomination of blasphemy: nor are those who maintain them ever styled blasphemers. Nay, among those who are no idolaters, but acknowledge the unity and spirituality of the divine nature (as did all the Jewish sects), it is not sufficient to constitute this crime, that a man's opinions be, in their consequences, derogatory from the divine majesty, if they be not perceived to be so by him who holds them, and broached on purpose to diminish men's veneration of God. The opinions of the Sadducees appear in effect to have detracted from the justice, the goodness, and even the power of the Deity, as their tendency was but too manifestly to diminish in men the fear of God, and consequently to weaken their obligations to obey him. Yet neither our Saviour, nor any of the inspired writers, calls them *blasphemous*, as those opinions did not appear to themselves to detract, nor were advanced with the intention of detracting, from the honour of God. Our Lord only said to the Sadducees, *Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.* Nay, it does not appear that even their adversaries the Pharisees, though the first who seem to have per-

verted the word, (as shall be remarked afterwards) and though immoderately attached to their own tenets, ever reproached them as blasphemers, on account of their erroneous opinions. Nor is indeed the epithet *blasphemous*, or any synonymous term, ever coupled in scripture (as is common in modern use) with *doctrines*, *thoughts*, *opinions*. It is never applied but to words and speeches. *A blasphemous opinion*, or *blasphemous doctrine*, are phrases, which (how familiar soever to us) are as unsuitable to the scriptural idiom, as a *railing opinion*, or *slanderous doctrine*, is to ours.

But to proceed from what is not, to what is, called *blasphemy* in scripture: the first divine law published against it, *He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord* (or Jehovah, as it is in the Hebrew) *shall be put to death*, when considered, along with the incident that occasioned it, suggests a very atrocious offence in words, no less than abuse or imprecations, vented against the Deity. For, in what way soever the crime of the man there mentioned be interpreted, whether as committed against the true God, the God of Israel, or against any of the false Gods whom his Egyptian father worshipped, the law in the words now quoted is sufficiently explicit; and the circumstances of the story plainly show that the words which he had used, were derogatory from the Godhead, and shocking to the hearers.

And if we add to this, the only other memorable instance, in sacred history, namely, that of Rabshakeh, it will lead us to conclude that it is solely a malignant attempt, in words, to lessen men's reverence of the true God, and, by vilifying his perfections, to prevent their placing confidence in him, which is called in scripture *blasphemy*, when the word is employed to denote a sin committed directly against God. This was manifestly the attempt of Rabshakeh when he said, *Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord* (the word is Jehovah), *saying, Jehovah will surely deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? Have they delivered*

Samariah out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

Blasphemy, I acknowledge, like every other species of defamation, may proceed from ignorance combined with rashness and presumption; but it invariably implies (which is not implied in mere error) an expression of contempt or detestation, and a desire of producing the same passions in others. As this conduct, however, is more heinous in the knowing than in the ignorant, there are degrees of guilt even in blasphemy. God's name is said to be blasphemed among the heathen, through the scandalous conduct of his worshippers. And when Nathan said to David, *By this deed thou hast given occasion to the enemies of Jehovah to blaspheme*, his design was evidently to charge on that monarch, a considerable share of the guilt of those blasphemies to which his heinous transgression in the matter of Uriah, would give rise, among their idolatrous neighbours: for here, as in other cases, the flagrant iniquity of the servant, rarely fails to bring reproach on the master, and on the service. It is, without doubt, a most flagitious kind of blasphemy whereof those men are guilty who, instead of being brought to repentance by the plagues wherewith God visits them for their sins, are fired with a monstrous kind of revenge against their Maker, which they vent in vain curses and impious reproaches. Thus, in the Apocalypse, we are informed of those who *blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.* *Preliminary Dissertations.*

Jesus Christ was accused by the Jews of blasphemy, when in curing the paralytic, he said "thy sins be forgiven thee"; which meant no more than "thy disease shall leave thee." Had the Jews accused Jesus of arrogance in attempting to command diseases to depart at his bidding, it would have been a more appropriate term. Jesus, to show that he was not arrogant, that he did not pretend to the possession of a power, which had not been

delegated to him, asked whether was easier to command by a word the removal of disease, or to say to the helpless paralytic, take up thy bed and walk, but that ye may know that the Son of Man really possesses this power—then said he to the sick of the palsy: "Rise, take up thy bed and walk."

In fine, in the New Testament, the word is used to denote, vile and calumnious speeches, whether the object of them be God or man. Thus the apostles were evil spoken of, that is, they were *blasphemed.*

I submit to the orthodox whose mouths are so full of *holy cursing*, and *pious blaspheming* against the Unitarians, whether it would not be better to gain information respecting the real sentiments of Unitarians, and to mend their own hearts, and tempers, than to vent their *godly* slander against a people who are in every way their equals.

EUSEBIUS.

REPLY TO LECTURES ON THE APOSTLES' CREED.

Letter X.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

IT is with the greatest unwillingness that I take up the pen in religious controversy; but having seen a small pamphlet containing doctrines most contrary to the faith as formerly delivered to the saints, I could not (without what I consider a gross dereliction from my duty,) allow them to pass unnoticed. The pamphlet to which I allude, is entitled, "Lectures on the Apostle's Creed, delivered in the Church at Kirkham, to the Children of the National Schools."

In the eighth page, J. D. says that "The name of *Father* is given to God in our creed, as he is both the Father of the Creation, and also the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: and through him our *gracious* and *reconciled* Father." By the New Testament, however, we are taught that reconciliation takes place *only* with respect to man; 'we pray you,' says the inspired writer, 'be *ye* reconciled to God.' 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.' 'We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.' In no part of the

inspired writings are we informed, that the unchangeable Jehovah was reconciled to man, or that He ever needed to be reconciled to him. The words of holy writ are irreconcileable with the idea of God's reconciliation. 'God is love,' 'His mercies are over all his works,' 'God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' When the prodigal, mentioned in that truly interesting parable of our Saviour, had wasted all his substance, and was returning to his father, 'when he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.' Here there is nothing said of the father's reconciliation; as soon as he saw his son, he perceived his distress, and had compassion on him. Hence we may conclude that our God is of himself, without regard to any foreign consideration whatever, 'abundant in mercy, not willing that any should perish, but that he had rather that all should come to repentance.'

We now come to the consideration of two most important passages contained in the twelfth and thirteenth pages of a series of lectures '*chiefly compiled from the writings of the most celebrated of our English Divines.* (*) 'The bible is open to all men; but still it is not a book which one who may have been taught to read in one of our schools of charity, and who knows nothing but his mother tongue, can be expected *correctly* and *entirely* to understand.'—'They who are engaged in so humble a condition of life, as to earn their daily bread by their daily labour—they who are engaged in employments of perpetual confinement, must be content to derive a very great share of the knowledge of their bible, from their pastors and teachers; they must take a great deal of it upon the credit of others. But, in doing this in matters of faith, they do no more than what is their lot in every other concern of life. The joiner builds by the plan of an architect: the sailor sails under the direction of a pilot. Knowledge is always supposed in the *director*: and though the pilot *may* sometimes be ignorant of his office, the office is still necessary, and always must be, while men venture on the sea. On the very same general grounds, they whose education will best qualify them to form your judgement will have credit given to them in matters of faith.' Doubtless on hearing such doctrines the astonished audience would turn their eyes towards the preacher, expecting to behold in his person the triple-crowned-slave of slaves seated on St. Peter's chair, holding up the keys of heaven, and promising its joys to all firm believers in his own infallibility,

(*) See the Introduction to the Lectures.

but threatening the eternal pains of never-to-be-quenched fire to those who ventured to believe that they ought of themselves to judge that which is right. Great however must have been their surprise, on ascertaining that the speaker was a minister of the English Protestant Church, of that church which had dared to oppose itself against the doctrines contained in the writings of the most celebrated of the Roman Catholic Divines.——John (who had before given his testimony of the Messiah) when in prison (*probably being forewarned of his approaching execution, and desirous to establish his disciples in the belief of Christ)* sent them to say unto Jesus, 'art thou he that was to come? or do we look for another?'—'Jesus answered and said unto them, go and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; that the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor glad tidings are preached.' All the heathen philosophers who professed the teaching of morality, addressed themselves almost exclusively to the rich and to the learned, and it was only by such that they could be understood; but the man of Nazareth was commissioned by that God who is his father and our father, to preach the gospel to every one, not only to the rich and learned, but likewise to the poor and ignorant; and his preaching was such that he who runs may read; free from all the jargon and absurdity of scholastic mysteries. In it we see not the least mention of a Triune Jehovah, of a Man-God, of an expiring God, or of those other ridiculous and impious doctrines which originated amongst the Gentiles, to whom the preaching of Christ crucified was foolishness.—In that hour when Jesus greatly rejoiced in spirit he said, 'I praise thee, Oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that though thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding, yet thou hast revealed them to babes.'—If the pilot be ignorant of his office, both he, and the sailors who confide in him, will be indeed in a most deplorable situation, for 'if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.' No man is entitled by his education to form the judgement of another, or to have credit given to him in matters of faith. The words of our Lord and Saviour on this subject are most express and implicit, 'Nor be ye called Leaders: for one is your Leader, even Christ.' To those who would usurp such an authority may be addressed the following words of our Redeemer, 'Alas for you, teachers of the law! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye yourselves have not entered in, and those that were entering in ye have hindered.'

SERVETUS.

ILLUSTRATION OF

Proverbs xx. 14.—"*It is naught, it is naught says the buyer.*"

The following little story will serve in a good measure to illustrate the sentiment of Solomon, contained in the above expression.

Decio a man of figure, that had large commissions for sugar, from several parts beyond sea, treats about a considerable quantity of that commodity with Alcander an eminent West India Merchant; both understood the market very well but could not agree. Decio was a man of substance aud thought nobody ought to buy cheaper than himself; Alcander was the same, and not wanting money, stood for his price. Whilst they were driving their bargain at a tavern near the Exchange, Alcander's man brought his master a letter from the West Indies, that informed him of a much greater quantity of sugars coming to England than was expected. Alcander now wished for nothing more than to sell at Decio's price, before the news was public; but being a cunning fox, that he might not seem to be too precipitate, nor yet lose his customer, he drops the discourse they were upon, and putting on a jovial humour, commends the agreeableness of the weather, from whence falling upon the delight he took in his garden, invites Decio to go with him to his country house, that was not above twelve miles from London. It was in the month of May, and as it happened upon a Saturday afternoon; Decio, who was a single man, and would have no business in town before Tuesday, accepts of the other's civility, and away they go in Alcander's coach. Decio was spendidly entertained that night and the day following; the Monday morning to get himself an appetite, he goes to take the air upon a pad of Alcandar's and coming back meets with a gentleman of his acquaintance, who tells him, news was come the night before that the Barbadoes fleet was destroyed by a storm, and adds, that before he had come out it had been confirmed at Lloyd's Coffee House, where it was thought sugars would rise 25 per

cent. by change time. Decio returns to his friend, and immediately renewed the discourse they had broken off at the tavern. Alcander, who thinking himself sure of his chap, did not design to have moved it till after dinner, was very glad to see himself so happily prevented; but how desirous soever he was to sell, the other was yet more eager to buy; yet both of them afraid of one another, for a considerable time counterfeited all the indifference imaginable; till at last Decio fired with what he had heard, thought that delays might prove dangerous, and throwing a guinea upon the table, struck the bargain at Alcander's price. The next day they went to London; the news proved true, and Decio got £500 by his sugars. Alcander, whilst he had strove to overreach the other, was paid in his own coin; yet all this is called fair dealing; but I am sure neither of them would have desired to be done by, as they did to each other.

Mandeville.

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

"Ye teach for doctrines the traditions of men!"

Continued from vol. iii. page 248.

PUBLIC BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

"AND note, That there shall be for every male child to be baptized two godfathers and one godmother; and for every female child one godfather and two godmothers."

Godfathers and godmothers (as they are most irreverently termed) are persons who promise to perform certain duties, which not one in a hundred ever *thinks* of; and which, indeed, no mortal ever *can* perform. For none can ensure, that a child shall walk in God's holy will and commandments all the days of his life, &c. &c. Nor is the appointment of such persons so much as hinted at, either by Christ or his Apostles. It was the invention of an arrogant priest, who presumed to greater authority

or greater wisdom than the teacher of christians. Godfathers and godmothers, were they to act consistently with the pledge which they give, would seize the prerogative of the parents of the child, who alone are proper, and who alone have the right, to look after the religious education of their offspring. These *natural guardians* should profess at the time of baptism, that *they* will "train up their child in the way he should go, so that when he is old he may not depart from it." No more is required of them by God or Christ; and no more can they undertake, than that they will *use their best endeavours* to teach him virtue and piety. They cannot *ensure* any thing; and it is a high presumption, as well as a piece of folly, for *strangers* to pretend to such influence and power.

"Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin."

This assertion is contrary to experience, to the perfections of God, and the plain language of scripture. Experience shews that a new-born child is pure and innocent, and that afterwards nothing but bad habits corrupt his spotless nature, and make him the creature of sin. Besides, as sin implies *doing wrong*, a child cannot be capable of it, because it has yet to learn what right and wrong are. Secondly, the perfections of the Divine Being are too glorious to create any thing wicked, and his mercies too extensive to curse the whole human race for the transgression of their progenitor. Lastly, Christ has expressly declared, that the inhabitants of heaven are as little children, and that unless we become like them we can in no wise enter into that kingdom; (*) consequently children cannot be corrupt, and the doctrine of original sin is a sinful doctrine.

"None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of water and the Holy Ghost. I beseech you to call on God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous mercy he will grant to *this child*

(*) Matt. xviii. 3, 10. Luke xviii. 15, 17.

that thing which by nature *he* cannot have, that *he* may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy church, and be made *a lively member* of the same."

As John iii. 3, &c. has been brought forward to support these superstitious views of baptism, I shall here give Dr. Priestley's explanation of this difficult passage, that the reader may be satisfied that there is no supernatural efficacy in the sprinkling of water upon the face of a young child.

"*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" (*) That is to say, unless a man be baptized, he cannot be considered as professing himself my disciple.

When any Gentile became a proselyte to the Jewish religion, (in consequence of which he was both baptized and circumcised) he is said to be born again, entering, as it were, a new kind of life.

"*Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*" Or, as our Lord had said, of a truth I declare that unless every man *in this age* is baptized and receive the effusions of the Holy Spirit, (†) he cannot be said to be my disciple.

"*That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.*" That is to say, the privileges of the gospel are not things that man can inherit by natural descent, but are of a spiritual nature.

"*The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*" Or, as the

(*) By the words, kingdom of heaven, and kingdom of God, (for they are synonymous) we are almost always, if not invariably, to understand the preaching of the gospel, or the gospel dispensation. This explanation must be constantly borne in mind by the reader of the New Testament, otherwise a great many of the expressions of Christ will often appear obscure, or hard to be understood.

(†) As the effusions of the Holy Spirit ceased with the preaching of the first converts to Christianity, we must of course understand our Lord's language as applying only to the age in which he and the Apostles taught the doctrines of Christianity.

words may be paraphrased, do not express so much surprise at my saying, you must be born of the Spirit; as the wind, though the nature and cause of it be not understood by you, produces great and visible effects, so shall it be when the Spirit (or miraculous gifts) of which I speak, shall exert its power.

Then shall the Priest say,

"Almighty and everlasting God, who of thy great mercy didst save Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water, and also didst safely lead the children of Israel thy people through the Red Sea, prefiguring thereby thy holy baptism."

Where did the writer of this prayer learn that the saving of Noah from the deluge, and the deliverance of the children of Israel from the Red Sea, had any thing to do with baptism? Really, the composers of the Prayer Book imagined strange things!

"By the baptism of thy well-beloved son, Jesus Christ, in the river Jordan, thou didst sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin."

This is a most absurd, unscriptural, and dangerous doctrine. It will induce the credulous wicked to put off baptism to a late period of their lives, that they may wash away their sins by being sprinkled, with what is most foolishly termed mystical water. This ceremony, they will naturally think, will answer the same purpose as amendment of life, and so impose upon themselves by a fatal delusion. Such, however, was the effect, in former times; (*) and if baptism has this mystical power of washing away sins, why should it not be deferred till the latest period, that the sinner may be thoroughly purified from all iniquity? And if it has *not* this mysterious cleansing efficacy, why assert such a thing?

Then shall the Priest speak unto the Godfathers and Godmothers.

"Wherefore after this promise made by Christ, *this infant*

(*) Constantine was of this opinion, and he put off his baptism till nearly the day of his death.

must also faithfully for his part, promise by you that are *his* sureties, (until *he* come of age to take it upon *himself)* that he will renounce the devil and all his works, &c."

What nonsense! How is it possible that a helpless infant can make a promise? Surely, if there ever was an absurdity, here is one. Besides, how can the godfathers and godmothers consistently promise that a child shall not sin before he comes of age?

Then shall the Priest speak unto the Godfathers and Godmothers on this wise:

"*Minister.* Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?

Answer. That is my desire."

This is a very curious, and, I must say, a very silly question; and the answer is not a whit better. I thought the infant was to be baptized, and not the godfather or the godmother. According to this, those persons who are fond of standing as strangers, (and there are many of this curious tribe) have baptism and washing enough to make them as pure as angels of light.

Then shall the Priest say,

"O merciful God, grant that the old Adam in *this child* may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in *him.*"

This expression has something of the ridiculous about it, and ought not of course to be addressd to the Almighty. It is probably, however, intended to intimate figuratively the unscriptural doctrine of original sin.

Here the Priest shall make a cross upon the child's forehead.

The practice of signing the child with the mark of the cross, is a superstitious Catholic ceremony, unworthy the rational system of Christianity.

It is certain by God's word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.

Does not this observation insinuate the horrid notion, that an infant would *not* be saved, were he to die unbaptized?

The Ministration of Private Baptism.

"The parish where the child was born or *christened.*"

It is improper to term baptizing christening. No man can be said to be a christian, unless he believes in the mission and doctrines of Christ, and practises his laws and commandments. Let no one suppose, then, that he is a christian, because he has been sprinkled, or dipped, by a minister. Such a ceremony will avail him nothing at the day of judgment.

"I certify you that in this case all is well done, and according unto due order, concerning the baptizing of this child; who being born in original sin, and in the wrath of God, is now by the laws of regeneration in baptism, received into the number of the children of God, and heirs of everlasting life."

Ye fathers and mothers, who hang with delight over your sleeping innocent babes, are ye not shocked at the horrid notion, that your darlings are born in the wrath of God? Do not your hearts beat with indignation, at so scandalous a charge against the Deity? Does not every action of the little creatures of your affection convict the authors of such a tenet of the vilest calumny?

PURGATOR.

(To be continued.)

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN, AND A QUAKER.

C. I am glad of this opportunity of talking with you. It was what I wanted.

Q. And why didst thee not take it before? I never shunned thee.

C. I am your minister; it became you to come to me.

Q. I promise thee, thou art none of my minister; I'll have none but of my own chusing. Besides, if thou mindest thy pride more than my salvation, and art too great to come to thy parishioners, small is my encouragement to come to thee; the Apostles stood not thus upon their dignity.

C. The Apostles went to those who could not come to them.

Q. And to those that would not.

C. A modest man would have doubted, and heard what I had to say.

Q. Friend, hast thou thyself no doubts about the straitness of the way that thou art in?

C. Certainly, no.

Q. Then am I more modest than thou art. I often doubt, and go to God with my doubts.

C. But you should go to him in a proper way.

Q. I seek him by prayer, and endeavour to understand his will from the scriptures of truth. Knowest thou a more proper way?

C. Do you understand the holy scriptures?

Q. It is thy fault, and the fault of thy brethren, if I do not. The clergy have translated them.

C. But there are still many difficult places in them which the clergy understand best.

Q. If the clergy understand them, then are they not difficult to laymen who know languages; and why do not the clergy explain them?

C. That is their business.

Q. Then they ill understand their business, since they vary and quarrel so much about it.

C. They only differ in controverted points.

Q. No more don't thee and I.

C. But I mean points controverted amongst us.

Q. That is to say, all points. Even where you say you believe alike you explain different; which sheweth a manifest difference also in believing. And art not thou unreasonable to expect, nay, to demand union amongst the people, when the clergy themselves are the authors of disunion.

C. Therefore we renounce such clergymen.

Q. And they renounce thee. And do not the Quakers act wisely to renounce you all, as you do one another?

C. You speak harshly, and untruly; there are numbers of us who adhere together in our sentiments.

Q. And there are numbers who adhere together against you, and yet call themselves of the same church with you.

C. I am sorry for it.

Q. So oughtest thou to be for charging me with speaking untruly, when thou thyself bearest testimony to the truth which I speak.

C. But you go too far.

Q. I do not, nay, I will go farther, and maintain, that the numbers thou boastest of in union with thee, were every man to explain his belief his own way, would all vary from thee, and from one another.

C. I do not think so; however, their varying in belief is no reason for believing.

Q. But it is a good reason why every man should have his own belief.

C. Then there will be no end of confusions.

Q. No more there is not in opinions and doctrines.

C. And is not that a deplorable case?

Q. So is the fall of Adam; canst thou cure it?

C. They are not parallel cases.

Q. Depend upon it, thou mayst as easily bring back Adam into a state of innocence, as all his posterity into one mind.

C. What, can't I reason a man into my opinion?

Q. Yes, if he like thy opinion and thy reasoning; perhaps he will think them both stark naught.

C. That may be his fault.

Q. And it may be thine. How are thy opinions better than mine? I think them worse.

C. They are warranted by the holy scriptures.

Q. I think mine are; I'll promise thee I'll try them by the scriptures, which I think I can interpret as well as thou canst. I'll tell thee further, that I am satisfied the God of mercy never damned any man for mistaking it; for I take it, that in revealing his word he mocketh not men by giving them a riddle instead of a revelation.

C. You know little of scripture, if you do not know that there are in it places which you cannot understand.

Q. Nor canst thou. As to those places, though they may be his will, yet I am sure they are not his revealed will, because he hath not revealed it; and if I take thy interpretation and conjectures for his word, then do I believe in thy word, and not in his. Now, where hath he commanded me to believe in thee?

C. He has commanded you to believe me, when I speak in his name.

Q. And so art thou to believe me when I speak in his name.

C. But I am his Ambassador.

Q. There I do not believe thee, because thou speakest in thy own name.

C. Why, does not St. Paul say, we are Ambassadors in his stead?

Q. Yes; art thou Paul?

C. No, I am only his successor; he himself is dead.

Q. So are his gifts and miracles; canst thou work miracles? If not, how dost thou succeed him?

C. I preach the gospel which he preached.

Q. So do I, and bear my own charges as he did his; and why should I pay thee for doing what I can do as well myself? I do not find that Paul

has left thee any wages, and I am sure he has left thee nothing else; his epistles are left to every man.

C. Yes, he has left ministers to wait upon God's ordinances in the house of God. I am one of those ministers.

Q. Friend, as thou art a christian, thou must needs know that every house is alike to Almighty God, who filleth heaven and earth, and dwelleth not in houses made with hands; and as to what you call ordinances, thou knowest that the apostles administered none. Every man did it for himself, and it was done from house to house. There were no bloody sacrifices in the religion of Jesus, and consequently no Priests, their only office being to slay beasts.

(To be continued.)

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE SPIDER.

Prov. xxx. 28.—*The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in King's Palaces.*

From every object in nature something may be learned that will be profitable to the mind. The spider, although generally regarded with a kind of disgust by human beings, is an object that may be contemplated with pleasure, and from whose actions much instruction may be drawn. The following may be considered as the anatomy of the insect.

Every spider has two parts, of which the fore-one, that contains the head and breast, is separated from the hinder part or belly, by a ligature, or very slender thread. The fore part is covered with very strong scales, and so are the feet, which are inserted in the breast. The hinder part is cloathed with a very fine and supple skin, and the whole invested with hair. In different parts of their head they have several fine eyes, generally eight, and sometime no more than six, two in the fore part, two in the hinder, and the rest in the sides. They are all without eye-lids, and are covered with an hard, polished, and transparent crust. As these eyes are immoveable, they have been mul-

tiplied in this manner, to give them intimations, on all sides, of whatever relates to them. All these creatures, in the fore part of the head, have two stings, or rather branches, shagged, or indented with strong points, like a couple of saws, and ending in a nail made like the claw of a cat. Near the point of the nail is a small aperture, through which, it is evident, they eject a very violent poison. They have no arms so formidable to their enemies as these. They open and extend their two branches as they have occasion, and when they no longer make use of the nails, they bend and bring each of them down upon its branch, like a pruning knife clasped upon its handle. They all likewise have eight legs, jointed like those of crabs; and at the extremity of these legs, three crooked and moveable claws; that is to say, a small one placed on one side, like a spur, by the assistance of which they fasten themselves to their thread; and two others of a larger size, the internal part of whose curve is indented, and which serve them to fix themselves where they please, and enable them to slide either obliquely, or with their back downwards, by grasping whatever comes in their way. Even polished bodies, such as marble and looking glasses, have those inequalities on their surface, as enable these creatures to fasten upon them, by the point of their claws; but as this point would be impaired, were they always to rest upon it, in their progress from place to place, they are furnished with two little round balls, or sponges, on which they advance with a softer pace, and draw in their bending claws, in order to preseve them on those occasions where they can dispense with their agency. Besides these eight legs, spiders have two others, inserted into the fore part of their body, and which we may call their arms, since they do not use them for transferring themselves from one place to another, but only for holding and turning their prey. But with all this formidable equipage, the spider would be unsuccessful in her wars, were she not as well accomodated with instruments to form an ambush, as with weapons for an attack. She has no wings to assist her in the pursuit of her prey; whereas her prey is furnished with them for its escape, and there would be too much dispro-

portion in their circumstances, if the spider had not a stock of thread, as well as a natural industry to spin it into a web and snare, which she spreads in the open air, through which her prey is continually passing. Instinct informs her when to set about her work, and she begins it when her prey first receives its birth; and then retiring into obscurity behind her net, she patiently awaits the enemy, to whom she herself is invisible.

(To be continued.)

AMERICAN UNITARIANISM.

THE UNITARIANS' CREED.

A new periodical work has started in the Unised States of America, called the UNITARIAN. The following is copied into the Christian Register of December 1, 1827, from which we extract it.

IN regard to the great object of all faith and worship—we believe in one God, and one only.

We believe him to be one, in the honest, fair understanding of that term. We believe him to be one in the same sense that *any* thing or being is one. When I say that I am one man, it is understood that I *am* one, truly—that there is no other being or person like myself within me—that I am one in respect to my body, my mind, my affections, my desires, my reason—that these are, in no sense, double or treble within me. So we say of God; he is one mind, one being, one essence, and in no respects is he two, or three, or four. We believe him to be underived, or self-existent; that there never was a time when he did not exist; that there never will be a time when he will cease to exist; and that throughout this eternity he is the same, without change, the infinite, eternal, immutable One, who created, and sustains, and blesses the universe.

We consequently reject the doctrine of the Trinity; which we reject for its essential incredibility, and for its having no foundation in Scripture. We regard it as a doctrine of a strictly heathen origin: having its birth in the dreams of Plato; taken up and improved by the fathers, who, coming over from Paganism, thought to give Christianity a new beauty by engrafting on it the speculations of the master of Grecian philosophy. It was so late as the council of Nice, in 325,

before it received a definite, tangible shape. This doctrine, one of the purest inventions of men; one that we believe the Apostles and Christians of the two first centuries knew nothing about; one, of which we in vain search for the slightest traces in the Gospel; a doctrine of inference; resting on the subtlest reasoning for its support; nowhere laid down in a single text of the whole bible in plain terms—this doctrine, we unhesitatingly reject; we cast it from us as a human error; as contradictory alike of the letter, the spirit, and the whole tenor of the bible. And we see and acknowledge in God but one mind, one being; that one being, to whom nature, in its unity of design and simplicity, every where bears witness; the one God, whom the patriarchs worshipped, and whom Moses taught—the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe this one God, whom we receive, on the united testimony of Reason and Scripture, to be the *object of our worship*.—We think that to worship *any* other being, is a breaking of the second command. Jesus worshipped God, not himself, or the Holy Spirit. He solemnly enjoins *us* to worship the Father. We do not understand how the intelligent Christian can read the instructions of Jesus himself, and remember his example—how he can remember the examples and teachings of the Apostles, and believe it his duty, nay, not perceive it to be an infringement of the most express commands of God, to address his prayers to any other being beside the Father Almighty, the Father of Jesus, and our Father: the God of Jesus, and our God. At the same time we judge not others. If there are any, to whom Scripture seems to say, 'Thou shalt bow down and worship Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God; thou shalt also worship the Holy Ghost, or spirit of God; and to each thy prayers, praises, and honours, shall be equal'—if any read thus in the Scripture, they do right to obey it, and we do not charge them with idolatry.

A NEW CHURCH.

We are happy to learn that fresh congregations are springing up in America, and that during the last year several temples have been erected for the worship of the ONE and ONLY GOD; the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. From a file of publications just come to hand, we copy the following, and hope to present our readers with several articles on the same subject, in our ensuing numbers.

ON Wednesday, Nov. 28, 1827, a new Church, lately erected in Saco, was dedicated to the worship of the one living and true GOD; and the Rev. Thomas Tracy was installed Pastor.

We understand that the Sermon was an able performance, and that all the services were appropriate and impressive. We are happy to learn that the Sermon will be published. We are told that the church is an elegant building, finished with much taste and neatness.

The following original Hymn was sung at the Dedication:

HYMN.

This peaceful spot Religion chose,
To light her holy, sacred flame;
Faith spoke the word, and here arose
A Temple to Jehovah's name.

And now to Thee, great King of Kings,
We dedicate this house of prayer:
Descend and dwell 'mid earthly things,
Direct and bless our worship here.

Here may the blaze of gospel light,
A guiding star in glory shine,
Full in the trembling sinner's sight,
And lead the way to truth divine.

Here, to disturb our peaceful breasts,
May ne'er a hateful passion rise;
Nor widow wrong'd, nor son opprest,
Bear chiding message to the skies.

Here may we tread the path of peace,
The path that saints before have trod;
That all may see and all confess,
This truly is the House of GOD.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Methodist Inquisition.

A Special District Meeting of the Methodists was lately held at Leeds; the Lords Inquisitors and their familiars, were the Rev. John Stephens, President of the Conference; and the Rev. Jabez Bunting, A. M. Secretary to the Conference; Rev. G. Marsden, Rev. J. Burdsall, and Rev. R. Newton, with about 25 other travelling preachers.

Several meetings were held, at one of which the Dissentients proved that only 76 out of from 300 to 400 seat holders, had

signed the petition for an organ. They further stated that at a District Meeting, the sanction of that Meeting had been refused to the application of the Trustees to erect an organ, and that according to the law of 1820, the Conference could not entertain the question without the sanction of such meeting being previously obtained.

The Rev. Jabez Bunting, spoke in reply at great length, and maintained that the Conference was perfectly competent to undertake and decide the question, without the sanction of the District Meeting; and as to the petition, the Trustees, if they had erred at all, had erred in promoting a petition among the people instead of at once applying to the Conference who were the sole judges of the case; for Methodism was as much opposed to DEMOCRACY as it was to SIN.

The proceedings had now attained sufficient maturity for entering upon the open trial of two of the dissentients, and Mr. James Sigston who is a Trustee, Leader, and Local Preacher; and Mr. Joah Mallinson, the Society Steward, were summoned to appear the next evening at seven o'clock to take their trials; Mr. S. on a charge of holding and attending illegal meetings, that is, meetings not called by the superintendent preacher: and Mr. Mallinson, on various charges.

The accused very properly would not appear, disowning the authority of the court; notwithstanding, the trials proceeded, and sentence of expulsion was pronounced on both delinquents.

On Sunday morning, it was announced from the pulpit, that the President of the Conference would address the Society, in the Old Chapel, on the afternoon of that day, and at Albion Chapel, in the evening, on the subject of these unhappy disputes. Considerable interest was excited in the Societies, as well amongst the Dissentients as others, and on both occasions the auditory was numerous. The President entered into a brief history of the late proceedings, and strongly urged upon the members the necessity of abandoning all opposition. He represented to them the dangers which awaited those who were obstinately determined to refuse submission to the wishes of the Preachers; that expulsion from the Society would be the inevitable consequence, and that that would involve a loss of their respectability in life, and endanger their final happiness. He alluded to a case where an individual (who had left the Methodist body, in company with several others) on his death-bed had deplored his separation from the Society, and though he (Mr. Stephens) had hopes of his salvation, yet it was a matter of the greatest difficulty. The effect of the President's addresses upon the assemblies, we understand, was various—some were induced to yield compliance with his request, whilst others who had not before made up their minds on the subject, determined to persevere in what they considered the line of their duty.

Several individuals during the evening resigned rather than continue Leaders in the Methodist Connexion, under the degradation to which an assent to the propositions, in their opinions, subjected them; and after several ineffectual attempts on the part of the Preachers to induce the remainder, nine in number, to acquiesce, a resolution was agreed to, excluding them and every other person from the office of Leader, who would not conform to the conditions required. We understand there are now forty-one dissentient Leaders in the Leeds East Circuit, who refuse submission to the terms prescribed, viz.—eight who have sent their class books to the Superintendent, nine expelled in a body, on Monday evening, and twenty-four others who have expressed their determination to attend no more Leaders' meetings in the Wesleyan connexion; but to meet all the members of their classes, who wish to meet with them, as usual.

THE Third Anniversary of the Unitarian Congregation meeting in Greengate, Salford, was held on Sunday and Monday the 30th and 31st December. The Rev. J. Grundy, of Liverpool, preached in the mornings of Sunday and Monday, and the Rev. W. Shepherd of Gateacre, on the Sunday evening. The Rev. W. Shepherd presided at the Dinner on Monday afternoon.

REMOVAL OF MINISTERS.

WE learn that the Rev. J. P. Bakewell is about to remove from Edinburgh to Norwich—The Rev. Mr. Taggart from Norwich, to York Street, London—The Rev. B. Mardon (who is become a Baptist) from Maidstone, to succeed the late Dr. J. Evans, Worship Street, London.

Obituary.

(In the last month.)

MR. W. Belsham, author of the History of the Reign of Geo. III. and various other publications. This Gentleman was the Brother to the Rev. Thomas Belsham, Essex-street, London.

The Rev. W. Broadbent, late Minister of the Unitarian Congregation in Warrington, aged 73.

The Rev. Dr. Poynter, R. Cath. Bp. of the London District.

Rev. Joseph Dunn, of Preston, aged 82—he had been Pastor of the R. C. Congregation in that town 52 years. He was one of the remaining members of the Society of Jesuits.

POETRY.

HORACE, BOOK 3, ODE 1.

From the Gentleman's Magazine, September, 1824.

I loath and shun the factious throng;
I hate the rabble's vulgar noise;
Attend in silence to my song,
Whilst to choirs of girls and boys,
Priest of the harmonious nine,
I sing in strains unknown, divine!
The sceptered tyrants highest power
Is only o'er his slavish train,
Whilst tyrants tremble and adore
Great Jove in his exalted reign,
He, the giant conquering god,
Moves all nature at his nod.

Vain man, by false ambition led,
Strives to surpass his rival's fame;
One that his groves may wider spread,
Another in the dusty plain,
Contending in the generous strife;
By virtue and a rigid life,
Another hopes to gain the crown.
Here affluence in conscious pride,
Of numerous clients seeks renown;
Meantime the destinies divide,
To each his lot, as in their turn,
They rise in the impartial urn.

The loftiest music of the lyre,
The feather'd warbler's sweetest song,
Could raise in him no soft desire,
O'er whose proud head the falchion hung,
Suspended by a single hair;
The dreaded sword forbad to share,
The sumptuous feast, or placid rest;
Soft sleep frequents with downy wing
The labouring peasant's humble nest;
Nor shuns the shady bank serene
Of Tempe, where the Zephyr's breath
Fans the murmuring grove beneath.

The man who loves to spend in peace,
With moderate wealth, a happy life,
Fears not the raging of the seas,
The storm or tempest's boisterous strife,
Nor dreads the influence malign
When Hadus or Arcturus shine.
No need has he the Gods to blame,
For vineyards beaten by the hail;
Now praying heaven, to send him rain,
Now grumbling that his harvests fail,
Now that the torrents sweep his fields,
And now that heaven no sunshine yields.

The fishes feel the indignant main
Contracted by the builder's power,
There lordly affluence sends his train,
Of workmen on the sounding shore,
And earth's great lords with impious pride
Rear dwellings in the ocean's tide.

But fear and guilt with lighter wing
Pursue ambition's highest flight,
Around the brazen galley cling,
And dismal cares perplex the knight.

Since then the wealthy in his grief
From Phrygian gems finds no relief;
Since he who splendid purple wears
All bath'd in Persia's rich perfume,
And drinks Falerna, has his cares,
Why should I wish to rear the dome,
Or bid the envied columns range?
Why for laborious riches change
My Sabine vale and peaceful home?

W. L.

SACRED LYRIC.

BY JAMES EDMESTON.

Where can I go from *Thee!*
All present Deity!
Nature, and time, and thought, thine impress bear,
Through earth, or sea, or sky,
Though far afar! I fly,
I turn, and find Thee present with me there.

The perfume of the rose,
And every flower that blows,
All mark thy love, in clusters of the vale;
The corn that crowns the fields,
The fruits the garden yields,
Proclaim the bounties that can never fail.

The vapor and the cloud,
The thunder-bursting cloud,
Speak of Thy majesty in words of flame;
The ocean as it roars,
Lashing the rocks and shores,
Declares from what a mighty hand it came

The vasty globes that roll,
Each on its own firm pole,
Through all the boundless fields of space alone,
Prove that indeed Thou art
The life-wheel and the heart
Of systems to our little world unknown.

From Thee I cannot fly;
Thine all observing eye,
Marks the minutest atom of thy reign;
How far soe'er I go,
Thou all my path wouldst know,
And bring the wanderer to this earth again?

But why should I depart?
'Tis safety where Thou art;
And could one spot thy being hold,
I, poor, and vain, and weak,
That sacred spot would seek,
And dwell within the shelter of thy fold.

Christian Register

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 38, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d*. FEBRUARY 1, 1826

REPLY TO LECTURES ON THE APOSTLES' CREED.

Letter II.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

ON the 21st verse of the 1st chapter of Matthew, "Thou shalt call his name *Jesus;* for *he shall save* his people from their sins," we find the following remarks in the 15th page of these lectures; "It is not barely said by the angel, that he, but as the original language expresses it, *he himself* shall save. And you will here mark the difference between the name, as given to the son of Nun, by Moses, and to the son of Mary, by the angel of the Lord. Joshua saved Israel, not by his own power, but *God by him:* neither saved he his *own* people, but the people of God: whereas Jesus *himself;* by his own power, the power of God, shall save his *own* people, the people of God. You may well, therefore, understand the interpretation of this name to be *God the Saviour;* and, in strict conformity to this explanation, and, as I have said, to mark the difference between the two persons to whom it is given, St. Matthew has expressly observed, all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name *Emmanuel,* which being interpreted, is *God with us. Emmanuel* is compounded of three Hebrew words, which mean *God with us.* And thus Isaiah's prophecy, that the virgin's son should be called *Emmanuel,* was expressly fulfilled by Christ's being called *Jesus;* i. e. *God the Saviour.*" *Autos* may be

used to signify either *he himself*, i. e. *by his own power;* or it may signify simply *he*, without designating whether it be by a power inherent in himself, or by a power communicated to him by some superior being. In which of the two senses the word *Autos* should be here understood must be ascertained by a reference to other passages in the unerring word of God; "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit, and with power. God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those that were under the law. Of myself I can do nothing. The son can do nothing of himself. To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but to those for whom it is prepared by my Father. Him God exalted to his right hand to be a leader and a Saviour. To the son he saith, God is thy throne for ever and ever; a sceptre of rectitude is the sceptre of thy kingdom: thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: therefore God, even *thy* God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." From these and many other passages of holy writ we are led to conclude that Christ will not save mankind by his own underived power, but by the power which he has received from that beneficent being of whom he spake when he declared, "My Father is greater than I."

It is most probable that the account of the miraculous or (as it is scholastically termed) immaculate conception, was extracted by some early christians educated in the Gentile schools from two spurious gospels, viz. "*The gospel of the infancy of Jesus,*" and "*The gospel of the birth of Mary.*" Epiphanius informs us that the Hebrew gospel of Matthew used by the Ebionites contained no account of the miraculous conception, but began at what is now called the third chapter, "It came to pass in the days of Herod the king of Judea, that John came baptizing with the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan, &c."

Mark, who is generally supposed to have drawn up an abridgment of the gospel of Matthew, commences his gospel as follows, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who will prepare thy way: The voice of one crying in the desert, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his

paths straight; John accordingly baptized in the desert, &c." Hence it follows of necessity that Mark either had not heard of such an extraordinary occurrence as the miraculous conception; or if he had heard of it, that he disbelieved it. It may here perhaps be asserted by the advocates for this conception that "omission is not contradiction." This argument will not however apply in the present case, for if such a conception be founded on fact it must certainly be regarded as forming a portion of the gospel of Jesus Christ which however only commenced with the preaching of John the Baptist.

"These are written," says John, "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." This declaration of the evangelist leads us to expect that we may find an account in his gospel of what constituted Jesus the Christ, the Son of God: Yet they who possessed only the gospel of John could not believe that Jesus was the Son of God, if this belief depended on their knowledge of the miraculous conception, since this Evangelist made not the least mention of it. In what sense Jesus was more peculiarly the Son of God than other men, will be seen in the 10th chapter of John's gospel; "Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law, I said ye are Gods? If those be called Gods, to whom the word of God came, (and the scripture cannot be made void;) say ye of him, whom the Father hath set apart, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest: because I said, I am the Son of God?" Hence it is evident that Jesus is in a peculiar sense the son of Him who is his Father and our Father, his God and our God, inasmuch as he is the divinely commissioned messenger of the Father who set him apart and "hath very highly exalted him, and of his favour rewarded him with that name which is above every name: that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." For more particular observations on the miraculous conception we refer the reader to an excellent Essay by R. Wright.

SERVETUS.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN AND A QUAKER.

(Dialogue II.)

Q. At our last meeting our conversation was respecting what thou callest a priesthood.

C Dare you say that God has appointed nobody in his church to preach and explain his word?

Q No; I neither do nor dare say it; and thou may'st spare thy big words. He hath left every man to preach it to another; nor doth it appear that thou hast any more call from him than every one of thy parish hath. If thou wouldest resemble the apostles, go and preach to the unconverted without money, and without price. Thy whole parish believe in Christ already, as much as thou doest, and did before they knew thee. They have the Bible themselves; and if thou bringest any tidings that are not in it, and that they themselves see not in it, they ought not to believe thee.

C You argue very insincerely with me. Just now you contended that I had none of St. Paul's gifts; and now you would have me go without those gifts, and do what he did with them; namely, travel over the world, and convert the unconverted.

Q No, I only would shew thee, that as thou dost not resemble him, thou art vain in pretending to succeed him; and so far I reason consistently, as thou dost weakly, if thou claimest all his reverence without any of his merit.

C I do not set up for the abilities of St. Paul; but still have qualifications superior to laymen.

Q What are those qualifications?

C I know languages; I have had an university education; and—

Q All these are civil qualifications, common to all men, who would be at the pains and charge. Laymen understand Latin and Greek as well as thou dost. The gospel wanteth no embellishment from those whom thou callest Virgil and Horace; and Christ crucified, is not sought nor found in universities, nor indeed the flesh crucified. If I am not misinformed, they abound with young men who are too often sinners, and with old men who are no saints. They are schools of words; but the gospel hath nothing to do with thy logic and vain philosophy.

C I was going to tell you, too, that I had studied divinity.

Q Knowest thou any divinity but what is in the Bible? and have not I the Bible? I think, and am sure, that it is a plain and intelligible book, at least as much of it as is meet for a christian, and to turn

it into doubtfulness, and disputation, and science, and gain, favoureth not of christianity.

C This is insolently said: who turns it into gain?

Q He who maketh a gain of it; which is worse than insolence, whereof thou dost groundlessly accuse me.

C What, do you not declare against preachers?

Q I have already told thee, I do not; I would have all men preachers.

C Aye, tinkers, and tailors, and cobblers.

Q Friend, beware of thy words: what were the apostles? They were no university gentry.

C But you say that we want the apostles' gifts.

Q I wish thou couldest confute me. However, we have all of us the apostles' books; and canst thou mend them?

C No: but I can enforce them; and the labourer is worthy of his hire, if you will believe St. Paul.

Q But if he laboureth for himself, why should I pay him; I profit not by thy labour; why should'st thou profit by my substance. I believe Paul; but Paul hath given thee no property in my pigs and barley.

C But the law has.

Q The law is not Paul. But I perceive, whoever is the giver, thou wilt be the taker

C Sir, you are rude.

Q How? Because I do thee justice.

C Let me tell you, sir, there is reason in it, as well as law.

Q Thy interest may be reason to thee. But thou wilt be put to it to give me a reason for giving thee something for nothing.

C Don't you know that under the law, the priests had their lot in the land?

Q Yes; but they were Jewish priests, or sacrificers. Art thou a Jew? And dost thou kill cattle as they did? And wouldst thou reconcile Judaism to Christianity?

C No; I would only shew that it is reasonable that priests should have a proper appointment.

Q I have already shewn thee the unreasonableness of having any priests in christianity.

C In this you saucily differ from all the societies of christians in the world.

Q I do not differ from christianity; nor am I saucy in differing from those that do. The blessed Jesus hath left thee no legacy, that I know of, nor so much as named thee in his will.

C The man grows profane.

Q Thou meanest unanswerable. Is it any article of thy creed, that truth is profane?

C Your having no established ministers amongst you, is enough to render your sect odious to all sorts of christians.

Q We have religion established amongst us. Is religion odious in the eyes, where there is not a livelihood to be got out of it? We establish no clergy, lest they should disestablish the peace and purity of the gospel; and whilst our preachers are under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we reckon they will seek no money. We therefore do not keep in pay men who sell speech.

C The truth is, the speeches uttered amongst you are not worth buying.

Q Friend, no speeches in the house of God ought to be bought, nor the tabernacle be turned into a shop. Why sellest thou thine, which as report saith, are not alluring? Freely you have received, freely give. Friend, what did the gospel cost thee? Or why should we purchase it at thy dear price, when we have it in our houses in more purity and plainness than thou canst give it?

C Yes, and you understand it by the Spirit.

Q Thou sayest it. We trust to the Spirit to direct us, who is promised to all that ask him. Thou trustest to Henry Hammond and Daniel Whitby for direction. Whether art thou or we best directed?

C I shall not believe that the Spirit is the author of the enthusiasm and dreams that are found amongst you.

Q The carnal man discerneth not the things of God. Paul was called a babbler by the Athenians, whose priests, who were many, had no illumination, but being men of dark and voluptuous minds, and feeding upon sacrifices and offerings, preferred Bacchus and his grapes to the Spirit of Christ.

C The comparison you would insinuate is impudent and profane.

Q Friend, meekness becometh a preacher. Thou hast the passion of a priest, but not the meekness of a minister of the gospel. Why dost thou fall upon me with bitter words, for telling thee a fact, which, in answer to thee, it was necessary to tell. Is it profane to say that the heathen clergy took offerings? Nay, since thou dost urge me, dost not thou take offerings? and did the apostles take any? I have put thee between these priests and the apostles, that by comparing thy self with both, thou mayst see whom thou resemblest most.

C If this be not profaneness, I know not what is.

Q The profaneness is not on my side.

C Let me inform you, sir, that for this language, in some countries, you would have your tongue cut out of your head.

Q I know it; and praise God that I am not in those countries, and that thou canst not bring those countries hither. It is plain that thou approvest their barbarity, else why dost thou think it due to me? I beg thou wouldst not be provoked, if I mention to thee once more the example of the apostles; where did they justify savageness and severity to any man for any opinion, or any words? where did they ever talk to Pagans as thou dost to me, who am a Christian, and endeavour to possess the temper of the gospel?

C Yes, you have a form of godliness: but—

Q Friend, in the first place, judge not; and secondly, beware what thou sayest against forms, for thy own sake.

C I say, if your preachers had power, they would quickly find texts for persecution.

Q I guess thou judgest by thyself; and thou judgest well. We know it; and therefore give them no power, nor the sinews of power, Pride and impatience are inseparable from it; it destroyeth all humility, and maketh men imperious, and persecutors. Why are the Popish priests more cruel and mischievous than Protestant priests, but because they have more power? And why is the Pope the most mischievous of all priests, but because he hath most power?

C You carry every thing too far. Preachers of the gospel ought to be kept above contempt.

Q Friend, they who are rich in spiritual things, want no other riches to save them from contempt, and they who are rich without these, ought to be contemned. Riches may render them formidable; but piety only, and a holy conversation, can make them reverenced. Revenues do not place them above contempt, but only encourage them to despise the people. The poverty of the apostles was great part of their glory.

AN APPEAL TO REASON.

Christianity and Deism Contrasted.

"SUPPOSE the Deist to be right, and Christianity to be a delusion, what then has the Deist gained?—wherein has he the advantage?—Is he *happier* than a Christian?—*No.* Is he *more*

useful in society?—*No.* Can he meet the sorrows of life with *more fortitude?—No.* Can he look into futurity with *more composure?—No.* His highest bliss arises from the indulgence of base lusts—his conscience is his daily tormentor—his social circle is a wilderness overgrown with thorns—his life is perfect madness; and, of his death, it may be said, 'he dieth as a fool dieth.'

"But the Christian is happy in himself, or rather in his Saviour;—he is *useful* in his day, and as safe, *at least*, in his death, as any of the children of Adam.

"Suppose the Deist to be *wrong*, Christianity to be *true* (and true it will be found,) then has not the Christian the advantage? Is he not a present and eternal gainer?—Yes. He has a constant supply of happiness from above—an unchanging friend in his Saviour and Redeemer, to whom he may unbosom himself freely—relief at hand amidst all his troubles—a sure foundation for the most solid hope—and a delightful prospect beyond the grave. The Christian *hazards nothing—he gains all things!!!* The Deist hazards, yea, *forfeits all things*, and *gains nothing;* while he lives, he makes himself the tool of the Devil, and when he dies, *he looks for annihilation, but finds damnation!!!*

"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.—1 Tim. iv. 8."

A Tract distributed gratis, on the occasion of the Rev. R. Taylor's Trial for Blasphemy.

A VILLAGE READING CLUB.

A correspondent informs us that a reading club, or village library, has lately been established in a village in Nottinghamshire, by which, at the trifling expense of threepence a month, the subscribers will be furnished with general reading. Among the subscribers we observe the names of the Protestant vicar of the parish, and the Catholic priest.

If men of different sects and parties in religion would unite, the fruits would be an increase of liberal feeling and sentiment, and of that good-will which binds man to man, and in the promotion of which, every good man will find pleasure.

AN ESSAY ON INSPIRATION.

Section I.

The Introduction—General View of the Corruptions of Christianity—The Importance of Free Inquiry—The Doctrine of Inspiration.

THE truths of Christianity, during the life of their great Dispenser, made but slow advances in superseding the errors and in reforming the corruptions of mankind. The Saviour of the world, that he might finish his career of sufferings unmolested, and win, rather than controul, the affections of the human heart, displayed with reserve the glories of his wisdom and power to an inconsiderable number of the inhabitants of a small portion of the globe. But this religion, when invigorated by the concurrent and decisive evidence of his miracles, his doctrine, life, death and resurrection, and, above all, by the supernatural powers communicated to the apostles after his ascension, for the vindication of his character and the establishment of his pretensions, began to spread with accelerated rapidity through the civilized nations of the earth. In a few years after the promulgation of the gospel, the active and unwearied zeal of its professors had extended the limits of the church into many and distant regions, and had gained numerous converts, even among the inquisitive and enlightened inhabitants of Greece and Rome. Nor could the stubborn pride, the national malignity, and the hereditary prejudices of the Jews, those grand impediments to a general conversion of that devoted race, entirely withstand the influence of the wonderful achievements, the simple and commanding eloquence, the unconquerable firmness, and the blameless lives of the primitive disciples. Many thousand proselytes, (*) even in the very bosom of Jerusalem, found themselves unable to encounter or to resist the wisdom and the spirit of a few unlettered Galileans, and yielded up their prejudices and passions to the predominant authority of truth and innocence.

(*) See Acts ii. 41. v. 14, xxi. 20.

Thus was the Christian church composed of a great variety of members collected from every nation under the Roman power, of characters infinitely diversified by discordant opinions, customs, passions, principles and educations. Judaising zealots, habituated from their infancy to the gorgeous solemnities of a ceremonial worship, and blindly devoted to the traditionary superstitions of their fathers; Jewish sectaries, discriminated and divided by a zealous attachment to their respective systems; proselytes of the Gate, disclaiming the obligations of the Mosaic ritual; Gentile philosophers, and wrangling sophists, completely versed in metaphysical subtilties and every article of logical debate; Gnostic visionaries, bewildered in the mysteries of mythology and allegorical conceits; these and others, of various denominations, with all their singularities and antipathies, national and acquired, pressed together into the community of Christians, united in nothing but a name, and unanimous only in the acknowledgement of *one God the Father*, and *one Lord Jesus Christ*. What wonder, if such a sudden influx of adventitious streams soon polluted the pure sources of Christianity and the scriptures!

The most perfect institutions, either of divine wisdom, or of human prudence, may be soon debased by the interference of perversity or conceit. Nor was the Gospel exempt from the common fatality of terrestrial things, after it was at length consigned by Providence to the hands of a degenerate race of beings. Immediately on the death of the Apostles, and even before that period, a multiplicity of heresies, the rank offspring of mistaken piety, unholy zeal, and imaginary science, infested the Christian Church. The faith of Jesus lost in a short time its beauty and consistence, by an incorporation with a variety of irrational and airy theories: and the pacific wisdom of the gospel was made to administer, by a strange and deplorable perversion, to animosity and the inexorable rage of disputation. 'The Tares' scattered by the watchful 'enemy, whilst the husbandmen were asleep,' soon propagated with a mischievous luxuriance, and retarded the growth of 'the good seed' which our Lord had sown, and his Apostles watered, with a thick and chilling shade. The meta-

physical disquisitions and verbal strifes of scholastic theologians, the accumulation of idle ceremonies to captivate the gross sensations of the vulgar, a ferocious spirit of persecution, and unceasing struggles for ecclesiastical dominion, productive of endless schisms and implacable resentment, in the earliest ages of Christianity; the oppressions of ignorance, and the usurpations of papal despotism in the latter periods, together with the substitution of bodily austerities, pecuniary commutations, and numbered prayers, for rational and solid piety, for universal righteousness, and purity of heart; these combined causes operated with such malignity and success to the prejudice of the Christian revelation, as almost to efface every vestige of this best gift of Heaven to disconsolate mankind. These enormous effects of vice and superstition, which are delineated by the hand of history as characteristic features in the portraiture of these horrid times, suggest reflections of humiliation and regret to the pious Christian, and are sufficient at once to gratify and confound the speculations of the proud philosopher.

But the human mind, after this long suspension of her powers, started from her trance, and reasserted her native dignity and privileges. Men of an inquisitive temper and intrepid spirit ventured to look in the face of the phantom Superstition, who overawed the deluded world with her formidable aspect; and had sagacity enough to descry some genuine features of Christianity through the mask which ignorance and priestcraft had imposed on them. A slight attention to the tenour of the sacred volume immediately detected the insignificancy of external forms, when put in competition with mental piety, and the inconsistency of spiritual dominion with the equal dispensation of the meek and lowly Jesus. Maturer information, and a happy concurrence of incidental motives, led the way to a total renunciation of popish tyranny in several countries of Europe, and contributed to reinstate the edifice of the church, so much disfigured by meretricious ornaments, and tottering with an unwieldy superstructure of base materials, of wood, hay, and stubble, on her ancient pillars, Liberty and Reason.

Many of these burning and shining lights, these benefactors

of the human race, have arisen in various countries on the continent; but our island has been eminently distinguished for a numerous succession of illustrious characters, who have employed their talents in illustrating the Christian scheme, and vindicating the unalienable rights of man. Without an unrestrained indulgence of theological inquiry and discussion, what were faith, but passive credulity; and religious persuasion, but a blind accidental prepossession, no principle of rational conviction, no deduction of intellectual exertion, no moral habit; but a mere mechanical result of an early bias and a systematical education? The records of revelation, which have been transmitted with pious care through many generations, as a directory for 'the Sons of God' through a dark and dreary wilderness to the joyful 'Land of their inheritance,' which are submitted to us, 'as to men of sense,' for our examination, would become as insignificant as 'a book sealed up,' and a fatal instrument in the hands of priests and politicians to enslave and debase the mind. It is our interest, it is our duty, to guard the rights of religion and humanity with a suspicious care, and to employ the advantages which they afford us, with zeal and diligence. We will examine the volume of the word of God with an humble confidence, as subject to him, and not to man; and in pursuing our researches through the various shades of probability to the light of certainty, we will pronounce with hesitation, or decide with firmness: and if we be so successful as to discover truth, will have the honesty to acknowledge and the courage to profess it.

Nor let us be deterred from the investigation of any article of our religion, or any proposed scheme of faith, by frivolous pretences of presumption and conceit, so scrupulously urged by some, who (it may be) from a sincere humility, and a profound veneration for the word of God, are unintentionally the most dangerous enemies of Christian liberty. (*) Such timid allega-

(*) See particularly Vol. III, of Bishop Hurd's Sermons at Lincoln's Inn, especially Sermons 3 and 11.

Instead of having recourse to the original fountain of information, the greater part of us implicitly imbibe the religious formularies of our fathers; and because some wrangling caballistic theologians, fifteen or sixteen centuries ago, picked

tions carry with them an appearance of disingenuity, and are calculated to promote an unreflecting acquiescence in authorised modes of faith, only because they have received the sanction of national approbation, and to discountenance the exercise of free inquiry and private judgment. What? can the application of our reasoning faculty, carefully improved and impartially exerted, to a severe discussion of that revelation which is the perfection of reason, and challenges our strictest scrutiny—can this, I say, be hazardous to ourselves, or detrimental to our religion? No: if Christianity be true, she will derive new honour and accumulated evidence of her celestial extraction from every disquisition. Even the cavils of the ignorant or conceited unbeliever will only serve to aggrandise her triumphs, and augment her lustre. Like the sun, ascending to his meridian strength, she will go on '*shining more and more unto perfect day.*'

Fortunately for the advocates of truth, every perversion of Christianity and the scriptures has, at the same time, offered violence to the unbiassed suggestions of common sense. Bodily macerations, vows of celibacy, the adoration of relics, pilgrimages, hierarchical supremacy, the incarnation of God, the damnable Athanasian heresy (*) of a Trinity in Unity, three Gods in one, (†) and other mockeries of popish and protestant super-

out of the scriptures, *totidem literis*, I know not what inexplicable doctrines, and dignified them with the name of awful and sacred mysteries, we must acquiesce in the delusion: and if a man peradventure, instead of modifying his faith by the crooked standard of tradition and authority, should assume the liberty of thinking for himself, and should appeal from the masters on earth to the word of God and his own judgement, a charge of presumption and profaneness is presently echoed from every quarter by interested champions of the craft; *ye ought to be quiet, and do nothing rashly—Great is Diana of the Ephesians!*

But however exceptionable some of the sermons above referred to may be thought in some nicer points, many of them are superlatively excellent as moral pieces; and they, as well as those of the same learned and sagacious prelate on prophecy, are, in my opinion, perfect models of accuracy of method and composition. They are, at the same time, and in a very high degree, correct, perspicuous, and ornamental.—See Quint. Inst. I, 4, 2.

(*) 2 Pet. ii. 1.

(†) So says, and so says not, the Athanasian Creed: "*The Father is God, The Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God: and yet* (wouldest thou have thought it, reader!) THEY ARE NOT THREE GODS, but ONE GOD."

stition, are not more evidently incompatible with the unostentatious worship, the active morality, the free spirit, and the simple doctrines of the gospel, than repugnant to the clear sentiments of undepraved reason. Truth, indeed, is ever unalterable and the same: and the still small voice of natural intelligence, that breathes in "every man who cometh into the world," speaks, not in such a loud and commanding tone, but in accents as unequivocal to the purged ear, as the oracles of revelation. They are both emanations from the same heavenly source of light and truth, and have been alike pronounced by Him, who cannot lie, and will not repent, to be "very good."

The subject on which we are entering, the Inspiration of the Sacred Writers, has, I apprehend, in common with many other points of Christian doctrince, been much misunderstood, to the great prejudice of our holy religion. It is my design in the following Essay to exhibit this doctrine in what appears to me its proper light, with all possible perspicuity and conciseness. If I be able to advance any observations to the satisfaction of the disinterested and judicious, or prove a mean of engaging others of more leisure and ability in the elucidation of this important subject, I shall esteem myself to have contributed no trivial service to the cause of revelation.

Nor let any man, from a pertinacious prepossession in favour of established opinions, or a malicious interpretation of my motives to this undertaking, prejudge me of a design only to depreciate the sacred writings, and to insult the belief of others. A proposition is not therefore true, because authorised by long prescription and general consent. That church, which was the infallible standard of orthodoxy for many generations, is now proscribed as heretical and antichristian, by those churches that still retain some of her pestilential errors, and are themselves hastening to desolation. (*) Let us not be influenced or intimidated by the fallacy of sounds and names. Let us not prefer the

(*) Churches sink as generally as banks in Europe, and for the same reason, —that religion and trade, which at first were open and free, have been reduced into the management of companies and the roguery of directors.—Pope to Swift, Let. III.

forms of usage and tradition to the dictates of right reason and the word of God. My veneration for Christianity and the scriptures is bound about my heart. But whilst I profess myself a Christian, (†) I remember that I am also a man. I embrace the Christian revelation with a cordial belief, as authenticated by an aggregation of direct and circumstantial evidence, sufficient to induce a rational conviction ; as inviting my assent by the most pressing motives; as enjoining my obedience by the most awful sanctions, and recommending itself to my understanding and affections by the plainest indications of wisdom and utility. I accept the scriptures, as the repository of the momentous truths of this revelation, as the guide of life, and the charter of immortality ; as the criterion by which my conduct in this probationary period of my existence will be estimated (‡) on the great day of account, before God 'the Judge of all,' (§) and my future condition be irreversibly determined to all eternity.

Section II.

The common Notion of Inspiration.

THOUGH it is an easy matter to define that idea of inspiration, which predominates among the generality of those who give themselves the trouble of reflecting, or at least of deciding, upon

(†) "But my Lord, although I find myself under an obligation to relinquish my present station in the Church of England, I do not renounce the profession of a Christian."—Dr. JEBB's Letter to the Bishop of Norwich.

Soon after the publication of that letter, during some conversation upon the author and subject of it, in a private company at Cambridge, I heard a young man of King's, a sensible person and a very good scholar, observe, in allusion to the passage above, that he could not esteem Jebb a Christian, and should be glad to know his definition of one.

As some others may possibly be as much at a loss as this gentleman for the meaning of the term Christian, it may be proper to satisfy their doubts on this head, from indisputable authority, and convince them that Trinitarians have no exclusive title to that glorious denomination.—'If thou shalt *confess* with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe* in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved ;' [i. e. thou shalt be a Christian.]—PAUL, Rom. x, 9.

[‡] John xii, 48, 49. [§] Heb. xii, 23.

this subject; yet, either from the uninterrupted agreement of Christians in their opinions on this subject, or from other causes, authors of judgment and reputation have so seldom discussed this delicate point, or have adverted to it with such circumspection and reserve, as renders it somewhat difficult to ascertain their sentiments with precision. According to the general persuasion, the inspiration of the sacred writers appears to be conceived of, as resembling that controlling energy which actuated the prophets among the Jews in the earlier periods of their history, and the apostles on the day of Pentecost; not unlike the phrensy of the Delphian priestess among the heathen, sitting on her tripod, and uttering oracles, as it was supposed, under the influence of the deity: not, however, as if accompanied with those external marks of perturbation, convulsed limbs, distorted features, and staring hair; but, with a mental impression equally involuntary and irresistible; an impression that superintended the pen and pervaded the conceptions of the writer, who was employed as a passive vehicle of the divine communications, and, if we may so speak, as the amanuensis of the Holy Spirit. The advocates of the doctrine of inspiration in its most qualified and sober acceptation, and in whatever manner its operations may be conceived of, will maintain, I presume, that a commanding ascendancy of the Holy Spirit irradiates the mind through all her powers with such efficacy, as precludes the possibility of error or misconception. Unless this account be admitted, I do not understand what meaning can be annexed to the word, or what that doctrine of inspiration is, which has ever been maintained in the church. But to this notion of inspiration, whether it be supposed a secret impression, or a communication through the medium of some external sign, I can by no means accede, and am now proceeding to invalidate and overthrow it. Indeed, it is perfectly immaterial, I apprehend, what mode of explication be adopted, if the persuasion in any case be, what is strenuously contended for by every writer on this subject,—absolute infallibility.

(To be continued)

RELIGION AT NAPLES.

THE following extract from a communication made by the Rev. George Kenrick, who is travelling on the continent, will shew that wherever Religion is a *trade*, and its ministers "*soul brokers*," the clergy will be the first to laugh at christianity, to turn it into a farce, and themselves to play the part of buffoons.

"On Sunday morning one of the first objects which greeted my eyes, was a party playing cards, not only with open windows, but sitting in the balcony, exposed to the view of the whole street. As it was about seven in the morning, they had probably been already to the early mass, and had been "*confessed*" for the sins of the past week, after which the Catholic considers the Sunday as *his* "to do his own pleasure." I paid an early visit, on this day, to the Cathedral of St. Gennaro or Januarius. There was a large crowd of persons assembled at confession, and from the strong passions of some, and the glaringly affected extravagances of others, some sobbing aloud to the priest, others sighing and groaning within themselves, others calling aloud to the Madonna and the Infant Christ for compassion, the whole scene was a perfect Babel of confusion. He who has seen Venice and Rome has still much to learn respecting the genuine effects of popish superstition, by visiting Naples. In the former cities the indolence and comparatively unimpassioned temperament of the inhabitants, render it a matter more of pomp and display than of real feeling. And in Rome, in particular, the immense body of Protestant strangers, with a scarcely suppressed smile on their countenances, goes far I am persuaded, to check the disposition to ludicrous extravagances. "It is to amuse the English," Cardinal Gonsalvi is reported to have said, "that these ceremonies are prepared." But at Naples you behold a mass of thorough devotees, unrestrained by any feeling of taste, and unawed by any apprehension of ridicule, obeying the impulse of their impetuous tempers. Under the magnificent dome of St. Peter's, I had seen a crowd of various nations of Europe, each in their separate confessionals, pouring into the ear of an ecclesiastic, who understood their respective languages, the acknowledgment of their past transgressions, and their vows of future amendment. Though a public, it was a decorous and comparatively tranquil scene, suited to the confidential nature of the communications, breathed in whispers through the gratings, which concealed the shame of the speaker from the eye of the hearer. But at Naples I saw elderly gentlemen, whose years might be supposed to have cooled the ardour of their feelings, kneeling down *between the knees* of a juvenile confessor, whimpering aloud and with clasped hands, apparently in agony, under his face, seeming to im-

plore *his* forgiveness. Others before images of the Virgin were breaking forth into groans and sighs; others sobbing to convulsion; others pacing up and down in agitation, and proclaiming aloud their self-condemnation. I noticed one young man in particular, whose deportment (had it occurred in England) would certainly have satisfied the Lord Chancellor as to the necessity of a statute of lunacy. With his hat and cane in his hand, he was perpetually spinning round and round, with a greater or less degree of rapidity, according to the greater or less degree of emotion excited by the thoughts passing through the mind, his brother devotees having, apparently, from knowing his humour, left him a free circle for the performance of his revolutions. As his sins came in rotation before his view, if any one smote him more sharply than another, this made him utter a sudden cry and quicken his pace. He spoke almost continually and in the voice of weeping, with his handkerchief at his eyes. Passing by the mad scene in the body of the church, I enquired if there would be any sermon that morning, and was pointed to the *crypt*, where, by the light of wax tapers, a priest was preparing to deliver an exhortation to an audience of not more than fifty persons. The preacher took no text, which is no uncommon thing at Naples, but delivered a desultory address on the necessity of Christians living wholly secluded from the pleasures of the world. I enquired why so few persons attended the sermon while there were several thousand going to and fro in the church? The answer was, "We make little account of the preaching; but to attend the mass and confession is our duty. If you wanted to hear preaching you should have been here during Lent."

"Shortly after my arrival I witnessed the grand procession of the last of the Octave, or eight days' Festival of *Corpus Domini*, or *Corpus Christi*, as the Church of England calls it. It would require a greater familiarity with the technical terms of ecclesiastical millinery and jewellery to be able to describe the splendid scene in appropriate terms, and probably a greater degree of patience in our readers to peruse the description, than either of us possess. Suffice it to say, that on this occassion, both the mother and the infant appeared in their costliest attire. An interest was, however, given to the gaudy scene which such exhibitions do not possess in Rome, nor in any Catholic country I have been in, except the Pays Bas, from the appearance of sincere contrition and devotion in the multitude who were present, and even in the court and royal family who took part in it. The whole concluded with the elevation of the cross in the hands of the archbishop and the trine benediction of the spectators in the name of the Three Persons of the Trinity. At the instant of the elevation the whole multitude (who it must be owned had been chattering and laughing the moment before) fell on their knees, and with all the outward signs of the utmost anguish, and many of them with tears actually rolling down their faces, muttered

prayers as fast as possible for lips to move, and then starting up, the whole pageant being over, scrambled home as fast as their legs could carry them. If there be a strange mixture of the grave and the ludicrous in the description, this is not the fault of the describer. The same strange combination is there in all the popish observances as witnessed in the kingdom of Naples. I have repeatedly stood by while a large company of devotees were performing a vow of singing a certain number of hymns at a particular shrine of the Virgin, (probably composed for the occasion,) and while I have observed some whose hearts, one would suppose, were ready to break with the strength of their emotions, I have seen others who, with roguish eyes, were tipping one another the wink to sing a little louder and more extravagantly than before, and soon as it was done, the whole party, rattled away laughing, joking, and pushing one another. In France, religion and its votaries are turned into ridicule. At Naples its votaries save the infidel the trouble, by directing the ridicule against themselves, and joining heartily in the laugh they excite. That some are from the first sincere, and that the hearts of others become touched by the mere putting on the semblance of so much feeling, I do not doubt; yet, from all I have seen, I am persuaded that by the mass of the people, as well as by the philosophic few, Popery is considered as an amusement, which serves to keep them from *ennui* the whole year round. In the early part of the year there are the street-preachers, of whose performances, although I have had no opportunity of hearing, them, I have received accounts on which I could depend. A gentleman who resides in the principal *place* or square informed me, that last winter, while Pulcinella was exhibiting under his window, a monk set up the signal of the huge wooden cross and erected his little wooden pulpit opposite to his rival candidate for public attention. "My friends," he began, "you are all fond of Pulcinella, I will shew you the true one," producing an image of the infant Christ. And he proceeded to deliver an allegorical or typical discourse on the actions of punch, which greatly diverted his audience. On another occasion an English traveller informed me, that a monk, whom he heard, proposed that his black skull-cap should represent an infidel, with whom he would hold an argument. The infidel was not only triumphantly replied to, but violently shaken for his obstinacy, cuffed and tossed in the air, and treated with utmost contempt. As the spring advances the Carnival begins, a period of forty days of every kind of diversion. With the fine weather come the festivals of numberless saints in the adjacent villages, in which, at Rome, and, I presume at Naples, horse-racing, the playing of beautiful fountains, and exhibitions of fire-works, and illuminations, are announced by *ecclesiastical authority*, along with the masses to be said and sermons to be preached, as forming collectively the business of the day. The summer festival of the *Modonna*

del' Arco, in the vicinity of Naples is, besides a religion celebration, a complete representation of the ancient Bacchanalian festivals. The very manner in which the eve of a saint's day is announced—the letting off of crackers before the door of the church dedicated to him—is a sufficient indication of the nature of the observance." (*Monthly Repository.*

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

[*Continued from page*, 22.]

A CATECHISM.

A WRITER in the *Examiner*, after speaking in high terms of Jeremy Bentham, appeals to public opinion, against the mischievousness of that compound of falsehood, absurdity, and mystification with which the minds of nearly all the children in this country are dragged under the title of the Catechism of the Church of England.

Let the candid and enquiring christian read the Catechism with attention, and I am persuaded he will acknowledge that the above language is not too violent, and will agree with me that it is the duty of every parent who would engraft the first principles of religion upon the minds of his offspring to find some other work than the irrational and unscriptural dogma of "An instruction to be learned of every person, before he be brought to be confirmed by the Bishop."

"Q. What meanest thou by this word *Sacrament?*

A. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof."

This language appears to me almost, if not altogether, unintelligible. I am certain, not one child in a thousand understands what he is saying, at the time that he returns the above answer.

"Q. What is the inward part or sign of the Lord's Supper.

A. The body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper."

Is not this transubstantiation? If words ever taught the doc-

trine, surely these must be understood in that sense. The poor thoughtless child is made to say, that "the body and blood of Christ are *verily* and *indeed* taken and received &c." If this be not genuine popery, I know not what is.

The Lord's Supper is simply a memorial of Christ. "This do in remembrance of me." And "as oft as we eat this bread, and drink this cup, we do shew the Lord's death till he come."

What pity is it, that christians adhere not to the sacred writings!

The order of Confirmation, or laying on of hands upon those that are baptized and come to years of discretion.

"We make our humble supplications for these thy servants, upon whom (after the example of thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands. to certify them (by this sign) of thy favour and gracious goodness towards them."

I shall here make an extract from that admirable little work entitled, "The Protestant Dissenters' Catechism," which will shew in a striking manner the folly and mischievous tendency of confirmation.

"Q. What is the nature and design of the rite of confirmation, as performed by the Bishops?

"A. It is designed for young persons, thereby to take upon themselves the vow which their Sponsors made in their name at their baptism.

"Q. What does the Bishop perform on these occasions?

"A. He thanks God for having regenerated them by water and the Holy Ghost, and forgiven all their sins. He then lays his hand upon the head of every person, and certifies them all by that sign of God's favour and gracious goodness to them.

"Q. What is required of persons in order to their being thus confirmed?

"A. Nothing more than their having a certificate from their minister, that they can say the Lord's Prayer, the creed, the ten commandments, and the catechism, and their answering *altogether* in the affirmative to the question, which is read of course "whether they renew the vows made in their name at baptism."

"Q. What do Dissenters object to this ceremony?

"A. That it has no foundation in reason and scripture, and is attended with very dangerous consequences. Besides, should the propriety of the rite itself be allowed, every parish minister seems to be as capable of performing it as a Bishop.

"Q. What dangerous consequence is likely to arise from this rite?

"A. Ignorant people who have too good an opinion of the Bishop to think he would declare a falsehood, are likely to look upon themselves to be what he has declared they are,—pardoned, regenerated, and interested in God's favour, and so conclude their state in safe, while yet they continue in their sins."

PURGATOR.

NATURAL HISTORY.

(*Continued from page, 27.*)

THE SPIDER.

Prov. xxx. 28.—*The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in King's Palaces.*

THE following is the manner in which the spider weaves and compleats a web so advantageous to her purpose. All spiders at the extremity of their belly, have five teats, or papillæ, covered with others of lesser dimensions, the orifices of which they open and shut, as well as contract and dilate at pleasure. Through these orifices they distil that clammy gum with which their belly is replenished; and whilst the spider discharges it through one or more apertures, the thread lengthens in proportion to her distance from the place where she first fastened it. When she closes the opening of her dugs, the threads no longer lengthen, and she remains suspended in the air. She afterwards makes use of this thread for her ascent, by grasping it in her paws, as some people climb up a rope with their hands and knees. With this thread she spins a web, that furnishes her with advantages of a very different nature. I shall now describe its texture and use.

When a house spider intends to begin a web, she first chuses a place that has some recess, as the corner of a chamber, or a piece of furniture, into which she may retreat under her web, and secure herself a passage either upwards or downwards, and by these means accomplish her escape from any danger that may occur; she sheds upon the wall a little drop of her gum, which immediately sticks to it. The spider then lets the liquor distil through a smaller orifice. Her thread lengthens in her rear, while she proceeds from one side, as far as the place to which she designs to extend her web. The thread is fastened to one of her spurs, lest it should fix along the wall, whilst her intention is, that it should only traverse the air. When she is arrived at the point to which she purposes to continue her web, from the opposite side, she there fastens this first thread by the help of the glew; and afterwards draws it to her, first bending, and then stretching it tight. Close by this thread she fixes another, which she carries forward, by running along the first like a vaulter on his rope. She proceeds to glew the second thread, on one side of the point where she began her work. The two first threads assist her, like a scaffold, to build all the rest. In this manner she passes and repasses several times, connecting or separating her threads as she judges convenient. I even suspect, by the expedition with which she proceeds in her work, that she forms several threads at once, and in order to keep them separated at an equal distance, without intermingling with each other, she distributes them into the teeth of the comb, which I have distinctly seen under each of the large nails on her paws. She afterwards stretches and binds these threads, one after another, with the same industry. Thus the first range is hung, and we may call it the warp.

After this, the spider doubles and trebles the threads that bordered her work, by opening all her dugs at once, and glewing several threads over one another. She is sensible that the extremity of her web ought to be hemmed and fortified, to preserve it from being torn; she likewise further secures and supports it with strong loops, or double threads, which she fixes all around it, and which hinder it from being the sport of the winds.

CONSOLATION.

"In one of the bloody battles fought by the Duke D' Enghien, two French noblemen were left wounded among the dead on the field of battle. One complained loudly of his pains, the other after long silence thus offered him consolation. My friend, whoever you are, remember that *our God died on the cross*, our King on the scaffold; and if you have strength to look at him who now speaks to you, you will see that both his legs are shot away."

D' Israeli's Curiosities of Literature.

INTELLIGENCE.

A Course of Lectures is now delivering in the Unitarian Meeting House, Moor Lane, Bolton, on Sunday Evenings.—The following are the subjects.

1828.

Jany. 13. On the motives which influence Unitarians in the promulgation of their peculiar opinions. *Rev. J. Cropper.*

„ 20. The apparent slow progress of truth, no discouragement to exertion. *Rev. J. R. Beard*

„ 27. The sovereignty and unrivaled supremacy of the Father. *Rev. J. Cropper.*

Feby. 3. The scriptural meaning of the term God. *Rev. B. R. Davies.*

„ 10. Who Jesus Christ was, and who he was not. *Rev. J. Cropper.*

„ 17. The design of God in the mission of Jesus Christ. *Rev. J. Cropper.*

„ 24. Christ the image of God. *Rev. J. G. Robberds.*

March 2. The doctrine of the atonement according to the Trinitarian scheme unscriptural. *Rev. J. Cropper.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our Correspondent *B*, will perceive we have attended to his hint. We hope the insertion of the "Essay on Inspiration" although it has excluded some pieces we had intended for the present Number, will be acceptable to our readers;—we shall continue it in succession.

The communication respecting the handsome testimony to Mr. Porter, in Ireland, was too late—it shall appear in our next.

We hope our postponed correspondents will indulge us patiently till next month.

F. B. WRIGHT, PRINTER.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—Jesus.

No. 39, NEW SERIES. *Price 4½d* MARCH 1, 1828

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

[*Continued from page 54.*]

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

Let every thing be done with order and decency, is an apostolic precept. Let every thing be done by the order of the state and by the hands of the priest, whether with decency or not, is the voice of the parliamentary church of England. Whoever reads the marriage ceremony in the Common Prayer book, will perceive no small want of delicacy in some parts of it. Indeed, no prudent father would so far forget himself in the presence of his daughters, as to read it at the breakfast table.

And this ceremony is to performed in the name of a non-entity called a Trinity, and three Gods are invoked by name, in opposition to reason and scripture, both of which declare that there is but ONE God.

The laws of this country having made it binding on all descriptions of people, except Quakers and Jews, to be married according to the rites of the Church of England; the Unitarian must either violate his conscience, or remain in a state of celibacy, or take a trip to Scotland. This is certainly a species of persecution, and is peculiarly galling to Unitarians, who view the ceremony as unscriptural and revolting to their consciences.

There appears, however, a growing spirit of liberality on this question. Perhaps a considerable proportion of the bishops would grant Unitarians the relief which they so justly ask. Others there are, who, apparently, would compel conformity for "*filthy lucre's sake;*" they cannot relinquish the *fees*. "What a diminution of their emoluments!" exclaimed the late Bishop of Chester, now Bishop of Bath and Wells. But, as if half conscience-smitten, his Lordship added, "He certainly did not mean to lay any great stress on this last argument." No, who would, that had ever heard the faintest whisperings of Christi-

anity, and was not lost to shame? (See debate, House of Lords, April 2d, 1824.)

The Priest shall say to the Persons that shall be married,

"I require and charge you both (as ye shall answer at the day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed) that if either of you know any impediment, why ye may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, ye do now confess it."

I see no necessity for this solemn charge, especially as most new married persons may have *some* impediment to their union. For they, indeed, are peculiarly favoured, whose course to connubial felicity is altogether clear and smooth.

And we are further told, "That so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's word doth allow, are not joined together by God, neither is their matrimony *lawful*."

What, then, becomes of all those marriages that are performed with the invocation of a God the Son, and a God the Holy Ghost, when God's word makes no mention of such Deities? And does God's word allow its ministers to profane the altar, by compelling persons to conform to a ceremony which violates their consciences?—and this too, from narrow party-spirit, or "filthy lucre's sake?" Let those look to it whom it may concern; and let them beware of "striving with their Maker."

"And the man holding the ring there, and taught by the Priest, shall say, &c."

The wedding ring is a superstitious token, and was supposed by the ancient Britons to have some connection with magic.

"With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."—"I pronounce that they be man and wife together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."—"God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you, &c.

The two first clauses, "in the name of the Father, &c." have doubtless the same meaning (in the estimation of the Church) as the last clause, "God the Father, &c." They are both introduced to express the three persons of the Trinity; and no Trinitarian would give a different explanation of them. Yet the Rev. Prelate before alluded to, said, "The Unitarian was not bound to assent to the accuracy of those terms. He might affix to them what meaning he pleased."- (Debate, House of Lords, April 2d, 1824.) Yes, he might say that white was black, and that light was darkness. But what then? would he either *make*

them so, or *think* them so? And in like manner, he might affix a Unitarian explanation, to a Trinitarian proposition. But would he believe it? "That's the question." It is not what he *says*, but what he *believes*, upon which the whole point turns; and he does not, and cannot believe that Trinitarianism is Unitarianism; or that clothing it in a Unitarian dress, would give it a Unitarian character. In fact, it is sheer trifling to talk in this way; it is mere baby-work, and highly discreditable to the judgment of the Reverend Prelate.

A man may affix to a proposition "what meaning he *pleases*." He has no *pleasure* in the case; his belief or disbelief is involuntary; and he affixes precisely such an explanation to it as its terms appear to him to warrant, and no other. He may *wish* to affix another, but it is totally out of his *power;* for he believes according to the evidence which is presented before him, and according to the force with which it strikes his mind. In fine, it is impossible for him either to believe or disbelieve as he *pleases;* and when the above Reverend Prelate affirmed the converse of this, he at once exposed the weakness of his own understanding, and insulted the understanding of others.

However, let his Lordship try to act on his own principle; for what is fish to one, is not flesh to another. He would have the Unitarian conform to the marriage ceremony, with the salvo, of "affixing to it what meaning he pleases." Well, then, in order to shew his consistency, and that he would do as he would be done by, let him vote for the Unitarian Marriage Bill, on the *same* condition; let him give his support, and satisfy his mind by "affixing to it what meaning he pleases." "He is at perfect liberty to do that." (*)

The folly of this principle must be apparent to all, except bigots. Its hypocrisy was justly exposed on various occasions in the House.

The BISHOP of London "could not agree with the Bishop of Chester that the parties have a right to put what interpretation they please upon the terms of the Church service."

The Bishop of ST. DAVID'S "disavowed any opinion that the Church could recognize the affixing of a different meaning to the words used."

The Archbishop of CANTERBURY said, "What was this but to encourage prevarication, and a simulated assent to doctrines which the parties did not believe."—"He wished to do away with that unhallowed equivocation which, sanctioned by law, now took place at the altar."

Lord HOLLAND asked, "What could this be but, as the most Reverend Metropolitan had stated, to recommend equivocation—to bring a man to the altar of God to use words in an equivocating sense.

(*) His Lordship's speech, April 2, 1827.

The Bishop of LICHFIELD and COVENTRY termed it, "a scandalous profanation of a compromise at the altar."

The LORD CHANCELLOR (not ELDON) characterized it, as "This solemn mockery, this unhallowed equivocation, as the Right Reverend Prelate called it."

And LORD CALTHROPE denounced it, as "a species of blasphemy or profanation committed by the ministers of the church." *

Such were the opinions pronounced by the above noble Lords, on this profound ethical principle, of "affixing what meaning we please" to a ceremony, which is performed only in *one*.

It might have have been well, perhaps, if they had argued as to the possibility of such a thing, before they had troubled themselves with the nature of the thing itself; † as it would have rendered their position much stronger, and at once demolished that of their antagonist. But what they have done, is amply sufficient to produce conviction in every mind that is not incased with bigotry and intolerance.

It has been thought advisable, in this part of the commentaries, to record the above facts, as exhibiting the position in which Unitarians at present stand, with regard to the marriage ceremony; and they are left to produce their own influence upon the mind of the reader, without going into the merits of the case.

It may be further observed, as a hardship upon Unitarians, that in this ceremony the doxology, "Glory be to the Father, &c." is twice repeated; Christ is directly addressed in prayer, and his mercy is implored; and all this time, the parties are directed by the Rubric to *kneel*.

To these private objections, others of a general nature may be added. The ceremony is too indiscriminate, in declaring that the parties, whoever they may be, "put their trust in the Lord." They may be Deists, or Atheists, or very wicked persons. Or they may be of those, whom a certain bishop pronounced, "*God-denying apostates*." But no matter, the minister is directed to commend them to God, as persons who "put their trust in him."

And then, again, how indelicate is the ceremony in various places! A modest female must be shocked at some of its passages. To point out particular instances of this description,

[*] See Debates, House of Lords, for April 2, 1824; May 4, 1824; June 3, 1825; and June 26, 1827.

[†] I have read somewhere, that the witty monarch Charles II. once proposed the following question for discussion to the Royal Society, intending himself to be present, to enjoy to fun. "*Why is a dead salmon heavier than a living one?*" The Philosophers set themselves to work in good earnest to ascertain the cause, and reasons many and weighty were urged to account for it. When, at last, one wiser than the rest, rose, and said, "Gentlemen, before we attempt to assign reasons for the *why*, would it not be more prudent to ascertain the *fact?* Is it so?" This had never crossed their brains. The king perceiving his frolic would be at an end, as soon as the hoax should be discovered, took the earliest opportunity to decamp, leaving the wise men to settle the point among themselves.

would be offensive. It may, however, suffice to observe, that the first address, " Dearly beloved, &c.; " the psalm, „ Blessed are all they &c.; " and the prayer, " O merciful Lord, and heavenly Father," are highly objectionable on this ground.

But the ceremony is never, perhaps, repeated throughout. And if one part is omitted, why not another? If that is left out which is offensive to delicacy, why not that which is offensive to conscience? Probably, because that little narrow contracted peevish thing, *party-spirit*, will not allow it. For it is difficult indeed to account for it on any other supposition; as men of liberal minds and correct feelings, would be as unwilling to do violence to principle, as they would to shock modesty. But so pernicious is religious animosity in its influence upon the heart! It debases that which is good, brutralizes that which is refined, and converts the first of all blessings into the most direful of banes.

PURGATOR.

(To be continued)

RELIGION REQUIRES THE USE OF REASON.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

Man is the only being, in this nether world, on whom God hath bestowed the gift of reason. Many other animals have advantages which he does not possess: he has neither the strength of some, nor the speed of others; and he would perish in situations from which others again would easily escape. But *reason* makes him swifter than the swiftest, and stronger than the strongest, and renders him superior to all. Bedim or extinguish this lamp of heaven within him, and he immediately becomes an object the most helpless, pitiable, and degraded of all God's creatures. He is no longer capable of using the necessary means even for the preservation of his being. If he be not narrowly watched, he will commit the greatest excesses: he will destroy the lives not only of all those who may be within his reach, but his own life also. The bereavement of this faculty is the greatest calamity that can befal a human being. Reason, then, is God's noblest gift, and we cannot place too high a value upon it. It is this which dignifies and ennobles our nature. It is this which guides us in all our pursuits after knowledge—which enables us to distinguish truth from error, fact from fiction. It is a lamp to our feet, and a guide in our path.

In philosophy and science, in all the common concerns of life, it is deemed a sufficient reason for the rejection of any proposition, that it can be reduced to an absurdity—that it can be shown to be plainly inconsistent with the dictates of reason and the common understanding of men. Can any reason be given why this should not be the case in theology? why in every other branch of knowledge men should act as rational beings, and in religion alone as fools and madmen? Can religious truth be so different a thing from truth of every other description, as that it cannot be judged of by the same means; nay, that a proposition in theology should even be received for the very reason that in every other branch of knowledge it would instantly be rejected? If a proposition in theology may not be the less true, though it appear plainly contradictory to the dictates of reason and common sense, how shall we distinguish between religious truth and error? If one inconsistent proposition may be true, so may another, even though its absurdity should be tenfold greater. Any reasoning which will justify the admission of one absurdity, will equally justify the admission of another. If the maxim laid down by the champions of pseudo-orthodoxy, that when a doctrine is taught in scripture we are not to consider whether it is reconcilable with reason and common sense, be admitted and acted upon, we expose ourselves to every species of deception; we may be made the dupes of every impostor; we open the floodgates to the admission of any absurdity, how great and monstrous soever it may be. The most visionary enthusiasts that have ever disgraced the name of Christianity, have produced texts of scripture in support of their reveries. And upon this ground, we must unavoidably swallow the doctrine, that at the jabbering of a priest the eternal God may be converted into a morsel of bread, and be eaten by his own creatures. "This is my body," is the express language of scripture.

Protestant Trinitarians afford a striking illustration of the truth of the saying, That no man is against reason, till he finds reason against himself. They are glad of reason as an associate in their controversies with Catholics, but in debate with Unitarians they turn upon their old ally, and raise a loud outcry against "*carnal reason*," because their doctrines cannot stand a moment before its dread tribunal. The bare sound of *common sense*, operates like an electric shock upon them; it seems to shiver their very nerves, and almost to throw them into hysterics. They appear to anticipate that it is the death-knell of their favorite idol. But why they should so fondly cling to the dying monster, I confess I know not—it has no loveliness that it should be desired. To be hated, its hideous visage needs but to be unmasked and be seen.

Surely, of two systems, both professing to be taught in a revelation from the God of reason and truth, that is, *at least*, more

likely to be true, and more worthy of being received, which is in perfect accordance with the dictates of those faculties the all-wise Creator hath bestowed on man, for no other purpose than to guide him in his pursuit after knowledge, and to enable him to distinguish truth from falsehood; than that which, by the confession of its very advocates, cannot be reconciled with those faculties, but requires their total and unqualified frustration. The difference, so much complained of, existing between Christians, can never posssibly be reconciled, unless all doctrines be brought to the crucible of reason. This, no doubt, will be done at last; when those doctrines which can stand the test of rational investigation will be hailed as true; and those which cannot be consigned to the moles and to the bats, as unworthy of being received by reasonable beings. God did not raise us above the brutes, by bestowing on us his noblest gift, that we might impiously renounce it, and degrade ourselves below the meanest of his creatures. He did not kindle a lamp within us, to lead us into the luxuriant garden of truth, that we might instantly extinguish it to wander into the dark and barren wilderness of error. If we receive any doctrine which our reason rejects, we undermine the foundation of all our knowledge—we destroy all distinction between truth and falsehood—we may be said to choose error rather than truth—we sin against our own light—and we may have reason to expect the fearful coudemnation of our Judge.

We may too, I think, safely lay it down as an axiom, that no doctrine which is absurd and irrational, which offers violence to those faculties by which we distinguish truth from error, can really be taught in a revelation from the God of heaven. I shall in my next, with your permission, Mr. Editor, attempt briefly to show, that the doctrines generally dignified with the name of orthodox and evangelical, are absurd and irrational, and that they cannot, therefore, be true.

OMICRON.

ORTHODOX SAGACITY.

AN ANECDOTE.

At a Religious Discussion Meeting lately, the passage in 1 Tim. iii. 16. "God was manifested &c." was introduced. It was remarked by one, that the word God was a corruption of the original text, and that in many approved MSS. the reading was "Great is the mystery of piety, *which* was manifested, &c."

An orthodox person, who claimed to be in possession of the *real* knowledge of the scriptures, and at the same time regarded Unitarians as completely destitute of all *saving* knowledge, replied, " then, if we are to take the reading proposed, and allow *witch* is the proper word, it makes Paul to say " Great is the mystery of *witchcraft.*" When reminded that it was the pronoun *which,* and not the noun *witch,* that the speaker meant, not being able to distinguish between the two words, he persisted in his assertion, " that Unitarians made the Apostle say," Great is the mystery of *witchcraft,* for if the word *witch* [which] was to be substituted for the word God, this must be the Apostle's meaning, which, like the whole of the Unitarian system, is an absurdity." *Après cela, il faut tirer l'échelle.* After this indeed we may let fall the curtain. This remark would have done honour to Don Scotus, or any of his brethren among the seraphic doctors.

It seems to discover a sagacity either more or less than human!

PIOUS DONATIONS.

About the year 597, Austin a monk of St. Andrews at Rome, was sent by Pope Gregory the Great into England, to spread the knowledge of christianity among the Anglo-Saxons, and to introduce a system of *church government* among them. The mission was successful; and in a short time the king of Kent gave Austin some lands, for the maintenance of himself and those ecclesiastics whom he had brought with him, and as donations of this sort were likely to increase, Austin desired the advice of Pope Gregory with regard to the manner in which he should dispose of the gifts and offerings of christians. Gregory answered that it was the custom of the church, to divide them in to four parts. To give one to the Bishops, another to the Clergy, a third to the Poor, and to appropriate a fourth to the repairs of the Church. And nearly in this way undoubtedly were the revenues of the christian church disposed of for a considerable time. It was not till a much later period that the clergy claimed as their own property, those effects which were entrusted with them as stewards, and a large proportion of which, they were bound to dispose of in support of the poor, and in the maintenance of places of public worship.

AN ESSAY ON INSPIRATION.

(*Continued from page, 50.*)

Section III.

Inspiration, in this sense, is unnecessary.

THE little necessity there is of having recourse to the doctrine of inspiration thus understood, to authenticate the historal writings of the New Testament, will be demonstrably evinced, if their credibility appear abundantly secure from other considerations. This fundamental rule of natural philosophy, that no more causes of things ought to be admitted than what are both true and sufficient for the explication of their phænomena, may be applied, I presume, to every possible subject of disquisition, and is not appropriated with reason to questions of philosphical investigation only. The qualifications, which appear to be indispensably requisite to the validity of any relation of facts, are the three following;—a sound understanding—competent information—and integrity of heart.

The first of these qualities enables an author to institute a right judgment of transactions from their consistency with the impartial deductions of sober reason, and from their analogy to natural appearances and the history of the human mind; to distinguish between rational probability and the semblance of it; to weigh and appreciate the degrees and diversities of evidence with a suitable exactness; to select, digest, and arrange the materials of history with discernment, and exhibit them with perspicuity. Without this presiding power, an author might be ingenuous indeed and well informed, but his relation would be a mass of crudity and confusion, a frivolous and inefficient detail of imaginary or uninteresting events.

The second of these qualities is essential to the very existence of history, as distinguished from fable, the unsubstantial offspring of fancy or credulity.

Nor is the third less necessary or important than the two preceding. Knowledge, if it conceal, falsify, or misrepresent, is worse than ignorance and delusion, and integrity of understanding, uninfluenced by the principles of virtue, is only calculated

to sanctify and facilitate the pernicious practices of artifice and imposture.

I am at a loss to conceive what additional qualifications can be deemed requisite to establish the authenticity of any historical narration, besides those here enumerated; strength of judgment, adequate information, and unbiassed affections: requisite, I mean, independent of an entire and unadulterated transmission to posterity, which is a consideration that equally affects every history and composition, sacred or profane, and is foreign to the argument under contemplation.

Let us now apply these positions to the writings of the four evangelical historians.

The whole conduct and texture of their several narrations indicate most unquestionably a competent portion of judgment and good sense in the respective authors. The Gospels carry with them such an air of veracity, (*) and are written with such unpretending simplicity and candour, with such unaffected gracefulness, such a perfect propriety of style and manner, the genuine result of truth and nature, and which artifice cannot reach; with such manifest indications of benevolence and disinterested purpose; such an ingenuous and full exposure of the inapprehension and absurdities of the principal pillars of the cause, and even of the historians themselves, without the least attempt to extenuate or excuse; such an uniform abstinence from all encomium on themselves or the hero of their story, as entitle the composers of them to a distinguished pre-eminence, in point of sincerity, above all other historians, and give their relations in some respects a characteristical discrimination.

Nor were the Evangelists defective in the article of information. Two of them, at least, were eye-witnesses of those transactions which they have undertaken to record, and received the doctrines and duties of Christianity as they fell from the lips of

* Let me be permitted to produce from the Gospels an instance of that beautiful simplicity with which truth sometimes unintentionally vindicates herself: 'Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the Sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but *wrapped together in a place by itself.*'—John xx, 6, 7.

Is this like the hurry and trepidation of men, STEALING AWAY THE BODY BY NIGHT?

their heavenly preceptor. It was their simple purpose to exhibit in a plain and undisguised narrative, ' what they had heard, what they had seen with their eyes, what their hands had handled, concerning the words of eternal life.'

Mark, if we may believe the concurrent testimony of ancient ecclesiastical writers, composed his Gospel at the instigation, or under the direction of St. Peter. And this testimony is greatly corroborated by the internal evidence of this Gospel itself, which is impressed with clear characters of the interference of that apostle, amounting to a presumptive proof that he was in some way connected with the composer of it. But if we had not that testimony and this corroboration, we know that this evangelist was so constant a companion of those apostles, who enjoyed sufficient means of information, that his authority for the facts related by him appear extremely credible.

We cannot certainly affirm that, with respect to the means of information, Luke had the same opportunities with Mark, though such a supposition would be highly probable. He was indeed the attendant and the friend of Paul, who, however, does not appear to have known our Lord during his ministry on earth, and may not have been favoured with a circumstantial knowledge of his life in the flesh by revelation, unless as far as the concerns of his mission might require it. But the judgment and integrity of this evangelist seem unimpeachable: and if we shall not be justified in allowing him an equal competency of information with the ocular witnesses, Matthew and John, or even with Mark; yet there are such signs of diligence and circumspection imprinted on the face of his narrative, such an uniform attention to the circumstances of those for whom he wrote, as shew an exact and extensive information, assisted by a profound discernment, and almost compensate his unavoidable inferiority to the rest.

If, then, it be thus evident that the gospel-historians were possessed of those qualifications which are of themselves sufficient to authenticate their narratives, and to command the assent of all reasonable men, who, in historical relations, can set truth and simplicity before the ostentation of rhetorical and

elaborate composition, why should we superinduce an unnecessary succedaneum? Why should we adopt, and maintain with as much solicitude as if the credibility of the Christian dispensation and the very existence of religion depended on it, the irrational and gratuitous hypothesis of a miraculous guidance and co-operation, 'to tempt the Lord our God?' (*)

Section IV.

It is inexpedient and improbable.

THE ignoble condition and unlettered simplicity of the first publishers of the Gospel were peculiarities extremely favourable to a reception of it in the world, as a dispensation of divine original. 'Whence have these men this wisdom and these mighty works?' was an obvious difficulty, and would not fail to strike the most incurious observer. The co-operating hand of God was the more conspicuously displayed in proportion to the inadequacy of the means employed in the dissemination and establishment of Christianity: and the word of truth was proclaimed with double efficacy from the lips of ignorant and unpolished Galileans. If a company of profound philosophers had been the commissioned dispensers of this revelation to the human race, the scepticism of future ages might have imputed the rapidity of its progress, not so much to those attestations of supernatural interposition by which it was accompanied, as to the dexterity and address of designing men (†). This argument is insisted on with great propriety by the intelligent apostle: 'we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the

(*) If we were to examine the productions of the four great historians of antiquity by the test of the preceding rules, the undisguised simplicity of the evangelists would appear to the best advantage in contrast with the credulity of Herodotus, the elaborate and artificial pomp of Thucydides, the cynical disingenuity of Sallust, and the national attachment of Livy; to mention no other peculiarities of these celebrated writers, which deduct more or less from the credibility of history.

(†) Origen has a similar observation with respect to the style of the New Testament, which illustrates and confirms several positions of this Essay.

power may be of God, and not of us:' and the Christian religion has received essential service from the illustration of this position by a variety of able advocates. Such a mode of procedure was also, I conceive, very different from what human prudence would in all probability, have chosen to adopt: and this consideration should dispose us to embrace any sentiments that are rational and well supported, however inconsistent with our own opinions of wisdom and propriety, and however contrary to our previous conceptions.

Whatever force and beauty such observations carry with them in reference to the primitive disciples, as preachers of the word, they preserve when applied to the same persons in the capacity of writers. Would not a perfect consistency of relation, and an exact pertinency of every part, the unavoidable consequences of a plenary inspiration, have worne a very suspicious aspect? Is it at all congruous to suppose, that they, who were frail and contentious, irascible, and irresolute, as men, should be divested of imperfection and fallibility as authors? Would it be expedient, and for the honour of religion, that the scheme and doctrines of Christianity should be delivered through a medium which precludes all examination into the validity and reasonableness of their pretensions? I will but just mention here the inexpediency of such a measure, from the scope it would evidently have given to the insinuations of the malicious and profane, respectiug the collusion of the evangelical historians, as this objection will be further insisted on its place beiow.

Besides, as far as I can discern, the argument for universal and plenary inspiration would plead also with equal cogency for propriety and purity of style; for perfection in the manner, as well as in the matter, of the Gospel histories. If it had been necessary for the evangelists to be infallible, and for us to think them so, superior elegance of composition and the graces of polished language would have been no unimportant discrimination of their writings from the works of ordinary and uninspired men. Surely the Spirit of God is not ineloquent, 'of a slow mouth and of a slow tongue.'—And such a conspicuous distinction might have secured the Scriptures from the disparaging

animadversions of fastidious and learned critics, and would, no doubt, have established their claim to a heavenly illumination beyond the possibility of dispute, by exhibiting, on the most superficial inspection, an irresistible inducement to our acceptance and veneration.

Let not any friend of revelation conceive of this mode of reasoning, as arbitrary and unsubstantial. Let the most unanimated tasteless reader compare the loftiest passages in the page of the Gospel-history with the eloquent, the sublime, the impassioned strains of antient prophecy. He will soon acknowledge an immense disparity between the thoughts and language of man and of his Creator. (*)

Nor would the ends of an absolute inspiration have been effectually ascertained, unless the same superintendance, which guarded the memoirs of the Gospel from the intrusion of error when they were first composed, had watched over the innumerable transcripts of them in after ages with equal circumspection.

What acrimonious contentions have harassed the Christian world, what a multiplicity of discordant opinions have originated, from the ignorance, inadvertency, or misguided zeal, of copyists and translators! Providence might for once have violated the fundamental law of her economy in the assertion of this favourite and essential point. She might have perpetuated, in this single instance, (†) her miraculous exertions beyond the period

(*) I can point out, however, a short passage in that Gospel which has the fewest pretensions to inspiration, to which I have never fonnd an equal for simplicity, pathos, and for that figure which rhetoricians call a vision. '*And all the people who came together to that sight, beholding the things that were done, smote their breasts, and returned.*—Luke xxiii, 48. Their consternation and solicitude, you see, were too great for utterance!

(†) *Until the completion of the age.* A text, which determines, a priori, that much agitated question about the point of time to be assigned for the cessation of miracles in the church, This is not the place to shew that the expression is merely Jewish, and susceptible of no other than the limited meaning which I have affixed to it. Suffice it to observe, that, as the material world, when called into existence by an extraordinary act of Divine power, was consigned to the regular operation of general laws, analogy might lead us to expect that the world to come, (Heb. ii. 5) the new creation (1 Cor. v. 17), after it had been sufficiently authenticated by a series of miracles, would be left to recommend itself by its own proper evidences, and to spread by the natural means and methods of propagation.

limited to their display, the establishment of the Christian dispensation in the apostolic age, and the annihilation of the Jewish polity in the destruction of Jerusalem.

And it appears to me at least not improbable, that if the Holy Spirit imparted to the evangelists an *equal* portion of intelligence (which is a reasonable supposition), their language and manner of composition would have borne some *resemblance.* Bnt to this it will be readily replied, they were left to their own particular judgment and ideas in this matter. True; and have we not reason to conclude, from examining and comparing their histories, that they were *altogether* permitted to write severally such an account as *they* conceived to be most proper *upon the whole?*

For what purpose, too, can we imagine that our Lord selected *twelve* Apostles, as perpetual attendants on his person, but, in particular, to furnish them with an opportunity of acquainting themselves with the nature of his office, the tenour of his dispensation, and the transactions of his life, in order to render them competent witnesses of these important truths to every generation? We should have possessed a more unequivocal sign of inspiration, if God had appointed to record the life of Jesus, a set of men who had never known Him or his Disciples, and had enjoyed no human means of information.

(To be continued)

RELIGIOUS PROSPECTS IN FRANCE.

We give the following short extract from the Rev. S. Wood's "Journal of a tour in the south of of France," 1827. Which we copy from the Monthly Repository.

The southern provinces of France are, as is well known, those in which the Protestants are in the greatest force. Though few, compared to their more orthodox brethren, they are yet a very considerable body, and their wealth and standing in society are much more than proportioned to their numbers. In Bourdeaux, especially, the richest of the merchants are of this persuasion,

and a liberal spirit prevails between the members of the two communions, which indeed is the case, I believe, in most of the towns through which I passed, excepting Nîmes, where there is a religious, or rather an *irreligious*, mob of the worst description. The prospects of an increase of numbers among the Protestants are exceedingly cheering. There is a very strong disposition among the Catholics to change their religion. Seventeen hundred came over at Lyons very lately, in consequence, probably, of the measures which had been taken by the authorities to prevent the celebration of Protestant worship in the village of Consorce, in that neighbourhood; and I was both surprised and gratified the other day to hear a Catholic declare, that if there were to be a persecution of the Protestants in France, two-thirds of the Catholics would turn Protestants immediately.

The following anecdote is strikingly characteristic of the religious state of France:

The curé of the parish of —— in Gascony, had given it as his opinion that it was very wrong in the women to come to church with nosegays. In spite of this prohibition, his fair auditors thought proper to make their appearance with the offensive ornaments in their bosoms. The enraged curé descended from his pulpit, and snatched away from them all the flowers he could find. The following Sunday the offence was repeated, and the same summary notice was taken of it; upon which their ladyships, not choosing to be dictated to in this arbitrary manner, seceded in a body, and determined to have a pastor more to their own liking. They first, however, procured a number of Bibles, that they might form a more accurate judgment of the pretensions of the rival churches; and the result has been, that they have hired a room as the first step to the establishment of a Protestant service.

Let the priests look to it! their influence hangs on a very slender thread! Should any more Protestants be hindered in the celebration of their worship, or any more nosegays be plucked from the glowing bosoms of the high dames of Gascony, we shall soon see the Catholic churches left to the quiet possession of the bats and the curés.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN AND A QUAKER.

(Dialogue III.)

C. Of all people I think the Quakers have the least pretence to glory in their poverty.

Q. Thou seemest in this to aim at being severe, but I feel it not. Our moderate wealth is the effect of our honest industry, and we are not ashamed of it.

C. As well you might, if you got it by your preaching.

Q. I do not find that thou art ashamed, and yet thy income is great this way.

C. Then you make comparisons?

Q. Assuredly, no ; thy motives and ours are not akin.

C. I warrant you preach by the spirit.

Q. How preachest thou? by the sheet?

C. I read my sermons, to avoid incoherences.

Q. Thou needest not, hadst thou the spirit; it would help thy infirmities.

C. Does the spirit help you to your low language, and your silly repetitions?

Q. If repetitions are silly, why shuttest not thou thy common prayer-book, which aboundeth therein? And as to your language, if the spirit were a dealer in style, why doth Paul write such bad Greek, as the learned say? But I can tell thee, we have many men amongst us, who preach in as decent language, and as free from tautologies, as any that thou canst read out of thy note book. I could mention the different efficacy too, and the manifest disinterestedness of our preachers; but I spare thee.

C. Spare me! I fear you not.

Q. Why, truly, nor I thee, since thou defiest me. I have found thee no terrible adversary, which may not be the fault of the man. Thy bishop would not do better, though his pay is greater.

C. It is too true, he could not: reason is thrown away upon you, and such as you.

Q. To deal freely with thee, as I am not the richer, so neither art thou the poorer, for any reason thou hast thrown away upon me.

C. Where men pretend to the spirit, it is vain to argue with them.

Q. Then why dost thou? But especially why floutest thou the spirit?

C. I hope there is a wide difference between the spirit of God and the spirit of enthusiasm?

Q. Doubtless there is; but I would be glad to hear thee explain the difference.

C. The same difference as between a good understanding and a wild hot imagination.

Q. Thy words sound well, but thy reasoning is naught. Is not the gospel above the best understanding? and was it not to the Greek philosopher's foolishness? They had as much sense as thou or thy bishop, and knew their own language better; but could not comprehend the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ the Lord, nor original sin and the resurrection. The light of the spirit hath therefore no analogy with the natural understanding, as you yourselves would contend, when you censure or punish people for following their reason, and departing from your systems. I must tell thee too, that the spirit warmeth both the heart and the imagination; for which cause Festus reckoned Paul mad, and the first christians sought martyrdom. And if———

C. Be shorter; we see you can preach.

Q. If I do, 'tis truth without tythes, and can but half offend thee.

C. Mighty witty! I just mentioned preaching, and presently tythes must be brought in for company.

Q. Why, dost thou like them asunder?

C. Fiddle faddle, what has all this to do with enthusiasm?

Q. Nothing; and wherefore didst thou begin it? I have shewn thee thy weak reasoning about enthusiasm; what sayest thou in answer?

C. That the Quakers are enthusiasts.

Q. And givest no reason. Is it thus thou convincest gainsayers, and edifiest thy flock?

C. My flock won't come to you for edification.

Q. It is well for thee that they do not. But to keep thee to the point, if I can; I tell thee, that we are no enthusiasts, and I will give thee a reason: We pretend to no more of the spirit than influences our actions, and our actions are sober and rational. Hast thou found in me the speech and wild behaviour of an enthusiast?

C. You have no ill knack at prating.

Q. Friend, my prating costeth no man any thing.

C. Though 'tis enriched with the spirit.

Q. I thank thee; thou givest a reason why it should cost nothing. The spirit is not bought nor sold, nor are the works of the spirit: wherefore he neither receives fees, nor claimeth dues. Simon Magus, who traded in conjuration and spells, was profanely for making a commodity of the Holy Ghost, and offering money for him, doubtless with a desire to make more. Thou knowest his doom; and yet, friend, there are many Simon Maguses in the world: yea, worse than Simon Magus. There be many who raise great revenues out of the spirit; yea, and have him not.

C. Who goes from the point now

Q. I do not. I feared thou wouldest think me too much in the point. We were speaking of the spirit.

C. Which you think you have. How do you know it?

Q. There is but one way. I feel him.

C. But how shall I be satisfied of that?

Q. The same way: thou must first feel him too.

C. So say all the enthusiasts in the world.

Q. Friend, are all who have the spirit enthusiasts?

C. No.

Q. How dost thee distinguish?

C. By their works.

Q. Thou sayest well. Now by what work of ours do we appear to be enthusiasts? We are sober in society, sober in our families: we fear God, and have an awful reverence for his name and power, and for this we continually read the scriptures which testify of him; insomuch that, for this our love to the bible, some of thy brethren laugh us to scorn, and scoffingly say, that we are *bible mad.* We fast and we pray in private, and preach and pray in our religious assemblies, and we have universal charity. We open our purses cheerfully for the support of the public: we are dutiful subjects, and meddle not in factions; we maintain all our own poor, and contribute not the less to thine; and even the clergy have part of our substance. Seest thou in this true character the marks of enthusiasm?

C. You indeed maintain a fair outside.

Q. Canst thou see farther?

C. I can see your ghostly *hummings* and *haw-ings.*

Q. Is it not as easy for thee to call them *sighs and groans which cannot be uttered;* whereof thou must have read, but seemest not to understand?

(To be continued.)

TEST AND CORPORATION ACTS.

The following is the Petition from the Unitarian Christian Congregation, assembling in Hunter Street, Liverpool; to both Houses of Parliament, for the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, &c.

The Petition, &c.

Respectfully Sheweth,

That your Petitioners are, on the principles laid down in the New Testament, Dissenters from all religious hierarchies, established by human authority. Regarding Jesus the Christ of God as the only legislator and head of the Christian church, they hold themselves amenable to God alone for their religious faith and practice.

Your petitioners do not in the least presume to instruct your Honorable House into the nature and operation of the laws of this realm; but they do most respectfully call the attention of your Honorable House, to what they feel to be a grievance, to which themselves and a large portion of their fellow citizens are subject from the operation of the Test and Corporation Acts.

Believing, in the testimony of the founder of the Christian faith, that his kingdom is not of this world, and that the Lord's Supper is a rite sacred to the memory of the Saviour of the world, and instituted for that purpose alone, your Petitioners cannot help regarding its application to secular purposes as a gross profanation, and also a violation of the dying Jesus' own command: "This do in remembrance of ME." And so far from answering the end originally designed, the conformity is no test whatever of principle; for your Petitioners conceive that none but those whose religious principles are made to bend to temporal interests, will ever comply with it. It is therefore a temptation to men to do what their consciences condemn; and little dependance can be placed by an earthly government on that man who is faithless to his God.

As free born Englishmen, entitled to all the privileges of their birth right, your Petitioners respectfully submit to your Honorable House, whether it be just, that, on account of their faithful adherence to the dictates of their conscience, and to the commands of Jesus Christ, they should be deprived of any of their rights and privileges.

Your Petitioners do most earnestly, and at the same time most respectfully pray, that your Honorable House will abolish the TEST AND CORPORATION ACTS, *and all other Acts* which infringe the rights and privileges of any class of men on account of their religious faith and practice.

And for this your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

REV. WILLIAM PORTER.

IT is with pleasure we copy from the Belfast Nothern Whig, the following testimony of respect to the Rev. William Porter. On the 18th December last, a Service of Plate was presented to him, with the following address, read by the Rev. Dr. Moore.—

TO THE REV. WILLIAM PORTER.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

We, members of the different Protestant Congregations in the town and neighbourhood of Newtownlimavady, request your acceptance of a Service of

Plate, as a mark of our sincere regard and esteem. We feel great pleasure in declaring, that we recognise in you the exercise of those Christian virtues, without which, profession is but a name. We recognise in you, Sir, an indulgent parent, an affectionate husband, a kind master, and a sincere friend; with a morality unspotted, a candour and adherence to truth unsurpassed.

Though some of us may entertain sentiments different from yours on certain doctrines, about which the wisest and best men have not been able to agree; yet we all perfectly concur, in expressing our warm approbation of the impressive manner in which you have uniformly inculcated, both by precept and example, the practical duties of Christianity;—and of your strenuous advocacy, and manly exercise of the right of private judgment in the formation of religious opinions.

We feel ourselves called on to express our disapprobation of the attempt made at the last meeting of Synod, to deprive you of the clerkship to that body, merely because you had the candour to avow, and the consistency to adhere to theological opinions which you believed to be right; we however rejoice, that that attempt was defeated by the good sense and good feeling of the body.

Whilst we admire and applaud that elevated spirit and unbended integrity which, in opposition to the seductive suggestions of worldly wisdom, prompted your conduct on that occasion. We marvel that in the present enlightened age and country, such conduct should have incurred the censure of some of your brethren in the ministry, we cannot help lamenting, that teachers of the Gospel should have departed so widely from its forbearing and charitable spirit; and that men, calling themselves Presbytarians, should have evinced so little regard for what we deem the fundamental principles of their church; namely—*the right of private judgement, and the sufficiency of the Scriptures, as a rule of faith.*

With the most ardent wishes for your happiness here, and your acceptance hereafter, through the blessed Redeemer, we take the liberty of subscribing ourselves your affectionate friends.

Moved by John Alexander, Esq., seconded by Doctor Moore—

That the foregoing Address be adopted by this Meeting.

WILLIAM MOODY, Chairman.

The following Answer was returned by Mr. PORTER:—

MR. CHAIRMAN,

I do assure you, and my other friends, that with very few persons, indeed, would I at this moment ex-

change my feelings. During the course of last summer, there was a time, I confess, when my spirit was nearly subdued, and when I thought I should be borne down by obloquy, merely for having expressed opinions, which, however erroneous they may be deemed, can have emanated from no other source than conscientious conviction; but that time is past. I have found that there are liberal minded men of every church, and of every creed, who will not allow an individual whose intentions are upright, to be run down by vulgar clamor. The approbation of the persons whose names are subscribed to that address, more than compensates for all the injurious imputations to which I have been subjected; they are persons whose social, moral, and intellectual respectability, cannot be called in question. *These* articles are not begrimmed, as such things have sometimes been, by the filthiness of the hands which present them. It affords me additional gratification, to reflect that this mark of your regard has not been earned by subserviency to popular prejudices, or by fomenting sectarian and political animosities. By ministering to the dissemination of jealousy, hatred, and all uncharitableness, it is easy for any one to obtain applause from the misjudging multitude; but the approbation of the wise and worthy cannot thus be conciliated.—That right of private judgment, which you are pleased to give me credit for vindicating and exercising, I do most willingly allow to all my fellow-Christians. Though perfectly conscious that the commendation of my conduct as a man, a minister, and a member of Synod, is much exaggerated; yet I do not hesitate to acknowledge, that this very exaggeration is gratifying to my feelings; it is kindness which has biassed your judgment.

The pecuniary value of these things, considerable as it is, constitutes only a small portion of their worth: neither silver nor gold did I expect to bequeath to my children, but these memorials of your esteem and friendship, it shall be my study to transmit to them unsullied, and I trust they will duly appreciate the legacy. To you, Mr. Chairman, and my other friends, I beg leave to return thanks.—Most sincerely do I wish, that it may be well with you now, and eternally well with you hereafter.

WILLIAM PORTER.

On the Tea-pot and Coffee Urn, is the following inscription, beautifully engraven:—"Presented to the Rev. WILLIAM PORTER, by his Protestant Friends, of different denominations, in Newtownlimavady and its vicinity, as a mark of their high esteem for his many amiable qualities in private life; and their cordial approbation of his fearless and disinterested assertion of the invaluable right of private judgement.—1827."

POETRY.

SELECTED.

ELIJAH'S INTERVIEW WITH GOD.

On Horeb's rock the Prophet stood:
The Lord before him past.
A hurricane in angry mood
Swept by him strong and fast.
The forests fell before its force,
The rock was shiver'd in its course;
God was not in the blast,
'Twas but the whirlwind of His breath
Announcing danger, wreck, and death.

It ceased. The air grew mute—a cloud
Came muffling up the sun;
When through the mountains deep and loud
An earthquake thunder'd on.
The frighted eagle sprang in air,
The wolf ran howling from his lair;
God was not in the stun.
'Twas but the rolling of His car,
The trampling of His steeds from far.

'Twas still again, and Nature stood
And calm'd her ruffled frame;
When swift from Heaven a fiery flood
To earth devouring came.
Down to his depths the ocean fled,
The sickening sun look'd wan and dead;
Yet God fill'd not the flame.
'Twas but the terrors of His eye
That lightned through the troubled sky.

At last a voice all still and small
Rose sweetly on the ear,
Yet rose so clear and shrill, that all
In Heaven and earth, might hear.
It spoke of peace, it spoke of love,
It spoke as angels speak above,
And God himself was here.
For, oh! it was a Father's voice,
That bade His trembling world rejoice.

RELIGION.

(From the Christian Register.)

There is a power which sooths the soul,
When storms of care and anguish rise ;
When lightnings flash, and thunders roll,
And clouds o'ercast life's sunny skies.

It breaks the chain which care has bound—
It charms the heart by grief opprest ;
And sheds a blissful radiance round—
A holy calm—a heavenly rest.

'Tis blest RELIGION—power divine!
That dissipates the blackest gloom ;
And bids bright hope of glory shine,
To gild the darkness of the tomb.

Nor are the hopes of glory vain—
Nor are they fading—insecure—
They fade not—die not—but remain
While endless ages shall endure.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our notice of the Rev. F. Knowles' excellent little work on the "Evidences of Christianity," is unavoidably postponed for want of room, we hope to find room to notise that and a small Tract by the same writer entitled "The True Worshippers," in our next.

We should be glad to see the argument of our Correspondent Purgator (p. 49) in reference to the late Bishop of Chester, (now of Bath and Wells), taken up in the House and warmly pressed on his Lordship, in the next debate on the Unitarian Marriage Bill.

Theophilus in our next.

F. B. WRIGHT, PRINTER.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—JESUS.

No. 40, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d* APRIL 1, 1823

ON THE DEITY OF JESUS THE CHRIST.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

I now proceed, according to my promise, to show that the doctrines commonly called orthodox, are not the doctrines of the New Testament, nor can they bear the test of reason. I begin with the Deity of Jesus the Christ.

It is strange, passing strange, having the Deity so clearly revealed to them, in all the infinity of his attributes, and all the spirituality of his nature, that Christians should ask the question, Is Jesus the Christ, the only true God, the creator and governor of the universe? One great misfortune, and the occasion of much error and many disputes, is, that men adopt words in common use with their party, without inquiring into their meaning, or affixing to them any definite ideas. If Trinitarians would but divest themselves of all improper associations, and candidly inquire into the meaning of the words they use, they would discover that the very terms of this question, rightly understood, are of themselves even, sufficient to decide the matter. *Jesus* is the proper name of a man: it is not peculiar to the Founder of Christianity, but was likewise applied to other men; from whom he is distinguished by being called Jesus of Nazareth. The *Christ*, means *one anointed:* as applied to Jesus of Nazareth it means that he was the anointed of God. The question, then, in plain English, and in so many words, is neither more nor less than this, Is a man, who was called Jesus, and who was the anointed of God, the very God himself who anointed him? Let common sense decide.

What is the history of Jesus? It is completely that of a human being. He was born in Judea, in the reign of Augustus Cæsar; he once was a helpless infant; he was nursed in the arms, and nourished at the breast of a Jewish woman; he passed through all the changes, and was liable to all the failings, emotions, and passions, incident to humanity. Like other human beings he gradually increased in wisdom and stature; he endured hunger and thirst, fatigue and weariness; he experienced joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain; he worked, probably, for a number of years, at the laborious occupation of a carpenter; when about the age of thirty he received a message from the God of heaven to his fellow men; he fell a sacrifice to the faithful discharge of his duty, expired upon the cross, and was laid in the dark and dreary chambers of the grave. Is this, I ask, the history of the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, whom no eye hath seen or can see; the creator of the heavens and the earth, the sustainer and regulator of the stupendous universe?

I am aware of the quibble by which those who believe in the Deity of Jesus attempt to evade the force of the argument drawn from the history of the human life of the exalted Teacher of Nazareth, viz. that he possessed *two* natures. But it is egregious trifling to refer to this. It is merely juggling with words, and playing the fool with the understanding. The New Testament teaches us nothing of any other Jesus than the *man* whom God made both Lord and Christ, and exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. And it signifies nothing how many natures Jesus may possess, whether two, or two hundred, or two hundred millions; the term Jesus must include them all. Thus, when it is said that Jesus was born, that Jesus died, it must mean that the whole being was born, that the whole being died. It would not be true that *Jesus* was born, that *Jesus* died, if only *part* of him was born, if only *part* of him died. Besides, when this quibble of two natures is stript of all varnish and coloring, and carefully looked at, the only difference which it presents is this, *that instead of making a man into God, it converts God into a man.* If we ask how God became possessed of two natures; we are told that he became incarnate, and took upon himself human

nature: that is, he entered into the womb of the Virgin Mary and was born. But what a monstrous idea is this for Christians to entertain of the Infinite Spirit! It may, indeed, be suited to the divinities of the heathens; some of whom made numerous incarnations, into lions, bears, serpents, calves, and monkeys; but it is a degradation of the Majesty of Heaven, it is a violation of every thing which nature and the scriptures teach us of the exalted Creator of the universe. It is a notion which was worthy of the age that gave it birth, when ignorance was regarded as the mother of devotion, and when men could profess to believe doctrines *because* they were impossible; but are we to be told in the present day, that the Infinite Spirit, who by a breath from his mouth called into existence the mighty universe, and whose unbounded presence fills immensity, could be incarcerated in the womb of a woman, become a fœtus, and be born? That the great Being who sits enthroned in everlasting glory, encircled in light inaccessible, which no being can approach unto, supporting, regulating, and sustaining myriads upon myriads of worlds, with all their countless multitudes of inhabitants, was once a helpless infant, dwelling in a stable among brute beasts, and who would there have perished but for the fostering care and unremitting attention of his own creatures? That He, all whose perfections and attributes are infinite, passed through the changes of infancy and youth, and gradually grew up to manhood? That the omnipotent God, who fainteth not, neither is weary, and whose presence prevades the universe, could be carried in the arms, and be nourished at the breast, of a human being: could employ himself for years at the drudgery of a carpenter's trade; endure hunger and thirst, fatigue and weariness, and travel from place to place on the plains of Galilee? That the infinitely happy and ever blessed Creator once had his whole soul convulsed with agony, expressed by strong cries and tears, at the prospect of dissolution? That He, at whose nod all nature would crumble into instant ruin, could be overtaken by his enemies; be crowned with thorns, buffeted, spit upon, and nailed to a malefactor's cross, by creatures who every moment depended on him for their very existence? that the King eternal, immortal, and invisible,

could expire in the most excruciating agonies, and be laid in the grave? Away with such a doctrine from the earth, for it is not fit that it should be named among Christians. How inconsistent are those Protestant Trinitarians, who believe in the incarnation of God, and the consequent Deity of Jesus the Christ, and how do they condemn themselves when they censure their Catholic brethren for denominating the Virgin Mary the mother of God. Nothing can possibly be more evident than this, that if God came down from heaven, incarcerated himself in the womb of Mary, and was born, then Mary must be THE MOTHER OF GOD.

OMICRON.

A Holy Relic.

THE curious little cross, of which the above is a fac simile, is about an inch and a half in height, made of a metal which easily takes a polish, and, when polished, has much the resemblance of gold. It has an inscription on the front, and also one on the back, composed of characters which are apparently of Greek original, but many of the letters are imperfect, and others appear only as a blur, manifestly from age. The letters, which are in relief, and defended by a blue coloured enamel, are something smaller on the cross itself than our sketch represents them, and have an affinity to the Sclavonian, which, according to several

authorities, is the immediate parent of the Polish, Lithuanian, Bohemian, Vandalian, Croatian, Russian, Carnish, Dalmatian, Lusatian, Moldavian, and many other languages. Should the annexed rough sketch, cut in wood, afford a clue by which any of our learned antiquarian correspondents can make out the sense, we should feel obliged by being favoured with a translation.

Were we to give an opinion on this subject, we might say that we do not know, that the above was not at one time suspended at the bosom of Helena, the mother of Constantine the great; at least, it is but fair to presume, that it has ornamented the breast of some lovely dame who mixed piety, superstition, and ornaments together. Could the present possessor of this precious trifle but obtain the bead-roll which once accompanied it, it might be of more value to him than a share in some of the mining companies in this speculating age. For although the grossness of that superstition which distinguished the days of our ancestors some centuries ago, does not now exist, there is enough of this *spirit of the church* in being, to justify the opinion that some small wares of a holy nature would still find purchasers. As a curiosity it would by many be deemed valuable.

PRIESTLY CLAIMS.

"Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."
"Obey them that have the rule over you in the Lord."

CONSTANTINE the Great the first Christian Emperor, was very munificent to the church, and in the year 231. he published an edict, declaring, that his subjects were at full liberty to bequeath as large a proportion of their property to the Holy Catholic Church as they should think proper. (See father Paul.) But so many heirs of families were disinherited for the purpose of enriching the church, and so many evils arose from this licence that it was found necessary greatly to limit it. Yet as the church

increased in riches the clergy, increasing in power and pride, in order to exalt the priesthood, the most errant fictions were published to the world, soon after the death of Constantine, as ordinances of Divine authority. In the *Apostolical Constitutions*, as they are called, bishops are represented as superior to kings, and as sustaining the characters of God, among men: and therefore it is said, "If he who rises up against kings is worthy of punishment, how much more he who rises against priests?"

In these *Constitutions*, the people are directed to bring to the bishop tythes and offerings that he may distribute them to persons in affliction. But it is said, "Thou shalt not call thy bishop to account, nor observe when, to whom, or where the distribution is made, or whether it be made well or ill." Lardner says, "These Constitutions were published in the latter part of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century, as the work of the Apostles; but the author of them is justly supposed to have been a bishop of that time!"

The injudicious conduct of Constantine towards the church was not, of course, immediately universal in its evil effects. But even in Britain about the middle of the fifth century, great depravity of manners prevailed amongst many of the clergy. Gildas the Historian of Britain, who lived about the middle of the sixth century, informs us, "that the clergy of Britain were pastors in name only, and not so in reality, as they were on all occasions more desirous to feed themselves than their flocks, not called to the ministry, but seizing it as a trade. Great promoters of other peoples' alms, but very sparing of their own; ignorant of the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, but artful in worldly things, and guilty of enormous vices.—What then (says he) can be expected from such men?"

In a manuscript life of Thomas á Becket, in the public library at Oxford, it is stated that Austin coming to preach at a town in Oxfordshire, the priest of the place complained to him, that notwithstanding his frequent admonitions, the lord of the town would pay him no tithes. Austin reproved the lord for his impiety, who answered, the tenth sheaf belonged to him as well as the other

nine, and the priest should have no tithes. Austin immediately excommunicated him; and turning to the altar to say mass, suddenly a man who had been dead many years arose out of his grave, and told Austin, that formerly he was *Hujus Villa Patronus*, and never paid tithes; for which crime, he said, he died under excommunication, and was carried to hell. The lord of the place, who was standing by, in great fear, being now asked if he would pay tithes, instantly fell down at Austin's feet, weeping and confessing his crime, and immediately became a diligent follower of Austin. (See Selden's History of Tythes.)

REMARKS ON MATTHEW XXVI, 24.

"*It had been good for that man if he had not been born.*"

THIS passage is sometimes brought forward by the advocates of the doctrine of Eternal Torments, as a complete proof of the truth of that doctrine. But the phrase is itself ambiguous; the word *he* may refer to the Son, or to Judas. In the former reading it would be "it had been good for that man [Judas] if he [the Son of man] had not been born," as then Judas could not have been tempted to the great sin of betraying him. If we admit the pronoun he to refer to Judas, then the sense is "it had been good for that man, if he [Judas] had not been born;" on account of the dreadful state of guilt, pain, and suffering, to which he would subject himself. In such a sense we must understand the reason that Job and Jeremiah both cursed the day of their birth, and pronounced a woe upon themselves, that they had ever been born. Is a passage so ambiguous as this is acknowledged to be, sufficient on which to build such a horrible doctrine as that of Eternal Torments?

THEOPHILUS.

ESSAY ON INSPIRATION.

(*Continued from p. 71.*)

Section V.

It is disclaimed by the Sacred Writers themselves.

Luke, in the introductory verses of his Gospel, professes to compile a narrative of those things, which were confidently believed among Christians, meaning thereby the life and doctrines of Jesus Christ, in imitation of some other writers not

mentioned by name, who had derived their information from eye-witnesses and ministers of the word. It were superfluous and absurd to recommend his history from the authenticity of his intelligence, had he been indebted for his materials to a different and supernatural mean of knowledge. He does not say that he relied on the gift of inspiration for his acquaintance with the subject he had undertaken to display, but on an accurate nvestigation of particulars down from the origin of Christianity. His expressions are, in effect, a positive and literal disavowal of all extraordinary assistances, and appear to me decisive in the present question. It is impossible to imagine that he would forbear to advertise his readers of the divine energy which enlightened his mind, if he had felt such an illumination: that were the height of ingratitude to 'the Father of lights, the Giver of every good and perfect gift:'—it were folly in the extreme, not to draw a recommendation of his history from so striking a distinction:—and it is equally inconceivable that he could be unconscious of the efficacy of such a new and powerful impression.

But the evangelists speak so little in their own persons as historians, and so very seldom concerning themselves, that I must confess myself unable to produce any passages from Matthew and Mark, that are applicable to the present inquiry. I presume, however, that the most zealous patrons of the doctrine of inspiration will not contend for any distinction between the sacred writers, but will easily allow an entire equality in this respect; so that, if the preceding inferences be just, we need no additional corroboration of them.

Yet it may be useful to remark, that John speaks of what he had testified of JESUS and his achievements, as of things which were transacted in the presence of the disciples; as objects therefore of ocular inspection, not of intuitive discernment. And when he gives his attestation to a very singular fact with uncommon earnestness and asseveration, he insists upon the veracity of his testimony to it, because it was a circumstance which had fallen under his own immediate observation. And at the conclusion of his Gospel, where the same emphatical assertion,

'We know that his testimony is true,' again occurs, we are led to conclude, by comparing it with the parallel passage alledged above, that his knowledge of the events recorded in the foregoing history was experimental, the sole result of what he had seen and heard, not unpremeditated suggestions of the inspiring Spirit of GOD, whose co-operation he does not claim or insinuate in any part of his history.

It will now be proper to advert to some passages in the Gospels, which wear an aspect unfriendly to these conclusions. I must beg leave, however, to premise, that, if the preceding deductions be legitimate, those texts of Scripture, which have been generally understood to establish the doctrine of a permanent and plenary inspiration, must necessarily be erroneously interpreted.

The first pertinent passage occurs in our LORD's commission to the twelve apostles (*):

'*And ye shall be brought before governors and kings on my account, for a testimony to them and the Gentiles.*

'*But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what to speak; for it is not ye who speak, but the* SPIRIT *of your* FATHER *which speaketh in you.*'

On which, and the similar passages, I observe,

1. That this plentiful supply of Divine assistance was to be vouchsafed to the apostles at a juncture peculiarly critical and pressing; when their fidelity and resolution would be put to the severest trial; when they were called upon to apologise for their conduct and the profession of their faith at the tribunal of insidious and blood-thirsty men, ready to anticipate their guilt, and determined to pass sentence of condemnation upon the slightest evidence, or even upon the simple acknowledgment of the Christian name: when any inadvertency on their parts, and an inability to defend their cause, would disparage the religion which they professed, and become a capital impediment to its propagation: at a juncture, that would occasion a most painful conflict between their love of life and all the endearments of it, and

(*) Matt. x, 18, &c. parallel to it are Luke xii, 11, xxi, 15.

their apprehensions of the dreadful alternative of apostacy, the consequent disavowal of them by their Master and their Judge on the solemn day of his appearing.

2. Because such a signal interposition was only promised on this emergency, we are hereby furnished with a strong presumption against its perpetuity and invariable influence on their minds.

It is, therefore, highly unreasonable to infer from this passage a continuance of the gift of inspiration through every circumstance of life, and particularly for the purpose of writing a detail of occurrences which they had seen or heard; an occasion of no great urgency, nor requiring such a signal interference.

The only remaining passage which I think it needful to consider, is the following:

'*But* (*) *when* HE, THE SPIRIT OF THE TRUTH, *is come,* HE *will guide you into all* THE TRUTH.'

This is part of our SAVIOUR's last address to his disciples, and was designed to console them under their sorrow at his departure. It is an inference from the preceding verse, which will conduct us to a true interpretation.

'*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.*

'*But when* HE, THE SPIRIT OF THE TRUTH, *is come,* HE *will guide you into all* THE TRUTH.'

As if he had said, 'Ye have many things to learn, and much to rectify, with respect to your notions of my character, (†) and that of my dispensation. (‡) But your present misconceptions and inveterate prejudices incapacitate you for a circumstantial and unreserved representation of the true state of these important matters. When the Holy Spirit, whom I shall be authorised to send after my ascension, shall come unto you, HE will

(*) John xvi, 13.

(†) They still thought of him as of a conquering Messiah, and intending to erect a temporal dominion.—See Luke xxii, 24. Acts i, 6.

(‡) As designed to include the whole race of man, Gentiles as well as Jews. An extraordinary interposition was necessary to convince the apostles of this.—See Acts, chap. x, throughout.

gradually enlighten your understandings, and purge the grossness of your conceptions. He will take you by the hand, and conduct you to the knowledge of those Gospel-truths, which are now so imperfectly apprehended by you, or are contrary to your persuasions.'

What relation this passage has to a permanent and plenary inspiration residing in the evangelists, though usually alledged in support of this doctrine, I confess myself unable to discover. The business of the Holy Spirit, we see, was to expand their hearts to more liberal conceptions, to correct their prejudices, and to remove their ignorance; to instruct them, in short, in what they did not feel and know, and had therefore no concern with matters of actual experience and observation.

Section VI.

Is inconsistent with their writings.

I proceed to the decisive test of an internal argument deduced from the tenour of the gospels themselves; and will demonstrate the inconsistency of this hypothesis of inspiration, and the consequent infallibility of the Evangelists, with their own plain assertions, by comparing one Gospel with another. A variety of inconsistent and contradictory positions have been detected and exposed by sceptical or malicious men, with such effect as to excite the solicitude of many a pious but unreflecting Christian, and the scoffs of the unbelieving and profane. But the scandal of the one, and the triumph of the other, are equally precluded by exploding this vexatious doctrine of inspiration. It is my intention to point out one or two clear instances of incoherency out of a multiplicity that present themselves, which will as effectually answer the purpose I have in view, as a more select and circumstantial exemplification, if they can be proved irreconcileable with the permanent influence of a supernatural illumination.

1. My first instance is the account of a miracle related by *three* Evangelists, which is not studiously chosen because more

pertinent than some others that might be adduced, but because it is one of the first events occurring in the order of time, so generally recorded. It is as follows:

MATTHEW, Chap. xi.

18. While he spake these things unto them, behold there came a certain Ruler and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is *now dead;* but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19. And Jesus arose and followed him, and so did his Disciples.

LUKE, Chap. viii.

41. And behold, there came a man, named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the Synagogue; and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

42. For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and *she lay a dying.*——

49. While he yet spake, there cometh *one* from the Ruler of the Synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter *is dead:* trouble not the Master.

MARK, Chap. v.

22. And behold, there cometh one of the Rulers of the Synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet.

23. And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter *lieth at the point of death:* come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live.

24. And Jesus went with him, and much people followed him, and thronged him.——

35. While he yet spake, there came from the Ruler of the Synagogue's house, *certain men*, who said, Thy daughter *is dead:* why troublest thou the Master any further?

In this short relation appear two inconsistencies: in one particular, Mark and Luke agree in opposition to Matthew; in another, Mark and Luke disagree with each other. A little ingenuity, I very well know, with the help of some specious hypothesis and some torture of the expression, would accomodate these accounts without much difficulty; but a plain unprejudiced understanding, who contemplates them as thus exhibited in their natural state, must allow a contradiction. At the same time, any reader, unshackled by the chains of system, will extricate himself with ease from this perplexity, and immediately perceive the unimportance, or rather the utility, of these variations: but he, who pertinaciously adheres to the doctrine of full and absolute inspiration, can by no artifice evade the charge. These

objections, trivial as they are, must ever remain to him insuperable embarrassments, and can never be reconciled with his opinions.

2. The second example to be produced is of far greater consequence and cannot possibly be adjusted by any qualifying supposition whatsoever.

Matt. Chap. xxvii.	Mark, Chap. xv.
44. *The Thieves also,* who were crucified with him, *cast the same in his teeth.*	32. And *they,* who were crucified with him, *reviled him.*

Luke, Chap. xxiii,

32. And *one of the malefactors* who was hanged, *railed on him,* saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us.

40. But *the other* answering, *rebuked him,* saying, Dost not even thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due rewards of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, *to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*

In *these* passages, at least, we are presented with as a palpable a contradiction as human language can express; and, I apprehend, either Matthew and Mark, or Luke, must be clearly convicted of fallibility and mistake. If Luke, indeed, had asserted simply, that *one* of the thieves only reviled him, and had made no particular exception with respect to the other, as in another instance of a similar variation from St. Matthew; (*) though the inconsistency would have remained an unanswerable argument in our favour, such a slight variation might have been disregarded. But when an event took place, so momentous and præternatural, as the instantaneous conversion and acceptance of a delinquent expiring on a cross, we feel ourselves deeply interested in a true determination of this matter; nor can we account for this capital omission, or rather contradiction, of *two* Evangelists, on the supposition of the truth of this transaction, but from their ignorance; nor can we acquit them of ignorance, without accusing another Evangelist of mistake.

[*] Compare Matt. viii, 28, with Luke viii, 27.

Though the concurrent testimony of two Evangelists may be thought to preponderate against the solitary evidence of St. Luke, especially as Matthew was an Apostle and a constant attendant on our Lord; yet we must recollect, that all the Apostles, except John, were either absent from the crucifixion, (which is most probable) or stood at so great a distance from the cross, as to be incapable of hearing any conversation that might pass between Jesus and the Thieves; so that Matthew may have had no better means of knowing the truth than Luke. And if Matthew had mistaken or were misinformed, Mark (to speak freely) was not unlikely to adopt his error: for his Gospel, in my opinion, is little more than a compendious transcript from the other, accommodated, indeed, to a particular class of Christians, and enriched with a few circumstantial additions, chiefly such as an eye-witness might easily associate with the facts, and which therefore Peter in all probability suggested. Yet I must confess, if this account is erroneous, it is perfectly unaccountable that Peter, who is recorded to have approved, if he did not dictate, that Gospel, should never inquire the truth of John, who stood near the Cross, probably during the whole time of the Crucifixion. I am aware that the date of Luke's history appears, from internal evidence, to be posterior to that of Mark; but we cannot help supposing, that such an extraordinary transaction must have been currently reported among Christians previous to the publication of either narrative.

We see what difficulties present themselves, if the error be imputed to Matthew and Mark. We will now contemplate some further inconveniences, which occur to the reluctant mind, from supposing the truth of the relation given by St. Luke.

And in this point of view the question grows still more embarrassing and difficult of solution. This gratuitous pardon and acceptance of the malefactor, on the simple acknowledgment of his guilt, seems equally incompatible with the clear deductions of reason, and the whole tenour of revelation. It strikes at the very root of religion and moral virtue. 'To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God,' are the duties required of every son of man by the uniform voice of Scripture,

as the indispensable title to the present regards and future recompence of our Heavenly Father. All habitual and unreformed sinners are declared by the great apostle 'unfit for the kingdom of Christ and of God;' nor will they ever be remembered by our Lord among the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem. Without holiness and purity of heart, no man shall see God. But here we behold a culprit, who, to all appearance, had pursued through life a course of rapine and injustice, and was at length suffering the judicial punishment due to his misdeeds; we behold this man, I say, whom the laws of human society had adjudged unworthy of an abode on earth, received into Paradise, *on the bare confession of his sins*, without being able to certify the sincerity of this confession by the emendation of his future conduct. Christ, no doubt, could pronounce upon the merit of his acknowledgments without such experiment, from his knowledge of the secret intentions of the heart. This mode of procedure, however, is not analogous to the usual course of God's administration, or conformable to the spirit and declarations of the Gospel. Besides, the terms in which the malefactor conveyed his petition, infer some acquaintance with Jesus and his character, which is no inconsiderable aggravation of his guilt.

After all, it is possible, I allow, that this man may have been more unfortunate and indiscreet, than habitually wicked: yet we must, on the other hand, confess, that such a relation, briefly exhibited, without any explanation or alleviating circumstances, has some appearance of imprudence, especially as it encourages an opinion of dangerous tendency; and we know, in fact, that some seducing and fatal persuasions, subversive of genuine piety, *have been* derived from it.

But the most inexplicable doctrine which this piece of history has been generally though to countenance, is that of an intermediate state of life and sensibility between the dissolution of the body and the general resurrection. 'THIS DAY *shall thou be with me in* PARADISE.'

(To be continued.)

THE ORIGIN OF THE INCORPORATION OF PAGAN RITES WITH CHRISTIANITY.

THE Author of our religion came into the world to reform man, not to destroy the constitution of his being; to purify and direct to a proper object the desires and propensities of his heart, but not to eradicate them. The pastors of the Church found in those, whom they gathered from heathenism to the fold of Christ, a fund of natural piety which had been grievously misapplied; they discovered in the new proselytes an understanding in spiritual exercises which should be fixed, and an imigination which required occasional indulgence as well as restraint; above all, they found prevailing, in every nation, laws, usages, and customs, which might be turned to the advantage of Christianity, but which could not be altogether abolished, or entirely removed. With the prudence of serpents and the simplicity of doves, these pastors applied themselves to the work of conversion; and having substituted a belief in the only true God, and in Jesus Christ, whom he had sent, for the paganism which prevailed, they took the institutions which existed, and having purified them of whatever was profane in their nature or application, employed them for better purposes, and a better end. They conciliated prejudices which they could not remove, and left to the infirmity of the convert, to his fancy, or to his interests, many forms and customs, which indifferent in themselves, had been perverted to evil purposes; but which henceforth, would be made to work together for his good. Thus many ancient rites of marriage were transferred from the pagan riitual into that of the primitive Christians. The ceremonial of the imperial court furnished many forms which are still observed in the Church; the processions and solemnities of the pagan festivals were exchanged for others not dissimilar to them, but congenial to the spirit of true religion, and to the natural propensities of men. The fire that once was lighted to Baal, was still lighted, but in honour of the Baptist, or of an Apostle; and the torches which blazed at the procession of Jupiter or Juno, were not extinguished, but carried in honour of Christ, or the Virgin Mother. The

feelings of men were not subjected to violence; their natural dispositions and propensities were not eradicated, but purified; and the transition from darkness to light, from error to truth, from idolatry to pure worship, was rendered to them as easy and imperceptible as was compatible with their salvation.

An Essay on the Catholic Claims, addressed to The Right Honourable The Earl of Liverpool, K. G. &c. By the Right Rev. James Doyle, &c. p. p. 281—283.

NATURAL HISTORY.

The Garden Spider.

THE History of the Garden Spider is very curious and very interesting. Many people believe that she flies when they see her pass from branch to branch, and even from one tree to another; but she transports herself in this manner: she places herself upon the end of a branch, or some other projecting body, and there fastens her thread; after which, with her two hind feet, she squeezes her dugs, and presses out one or more threads of two or three ells in length, which she leaves floating in the air. These threads are wafted by the wind from one side to another, and lodged either on a house or a pole; sometimes on a tree or a stake, cross a brook, and are there fastened by their natural glew: she afterwards draws them to her, to try if they are well fixed or not, and then they become a bridge, over which the spider passes and repasses in full liberty. She doubles and extends the thread as much as she thinks fit, by joining the shortest slips together; and then marches over a third part, or to the middle of the same thread, and adds another to it, by the aid of which she descends till she meets with a stone, a plant, or some solid body to rest on, or else she leaves it to fluctuate in the air, till it be fixed to some particular place. By this second thread she ascends to the first, and at some distance begins a third, which she fastens by the same management, When she has fixed three threads, she makes them stronger by doubling

them; after which she endeavours to project a kind of square within them, which is easy for her to accomplish, because she ascends by the thread which joins on the right-hand to that which is extended above, and then she passes to the other which descends on the left. During all this progress, she continually spins, and then shortens and bends the thread which falls on the right-hand, and joins to it that on the left, in what part she best approves, and by these means forms a square, or some figure that resembles it. In this square she makes a cross, with the same industry, whose middle point becomes a centre, to which she draws threads from every side, like the spokes of a wheel, which all terminate in the nave. This is the warp or basis of the work. She then spins a finer thread for the woof, and first places herself in the centre, where all the threads of the warp meet and cross one another. Round this centre she projects a small circle; after which she begins another a little more distant, and always continues to draw this circular thread from one spoke to another, till she comes to the large threads which sustain the whole work. When the net is thus spread, her next care is to entrap the game; for which purpose she places herself in the centre of all these circles, with her head downwards; because her belly, which joins to a very slender neck, would fatigue her too much in any other position; whereas in this posture, it is supported by her feet and breast. In this situation she awaits her prey, of which she is not long destitute, for the air is so replenished with flies, who are perpetually in motion, that a sufficient quantity of them soon fall into her toils. When a small fly becomes her captive, she despatches it upon the spot, because it is a repast, which does not require much preparation; but when her provision is larger, and happens to be a strong fly who makes a vigorous resistance, the spider, wheeling round, involves him in a number of threads, with which she entangles, fetters, and then keeps him suspended in the air; after which she bears him away to the nest below her web, and which she conceals in the leaves, or under a tile, or some other shelter, commodious either to pass the night in, or screen herself from the rain.

REVIEW.

Three Questions proposed and answered, Concerning the Life forfeited by Adam, The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Punishment, by the Rev. David Thom, (of Liverpool.) p. p. 110.

Our Readers, on referring to the Christian Reflector, Vol. I. p. 101, of the New Series, will find that Mr. Thom was condemned by some learned, not to say *liberal*, members of the Presbytery of Glasgow, for honestly advocating the real doctrines of the Scotch Reformers and of the Kirk of Scotland; and which Mr. Thom, at that time believed to be doctrines of Christianity. Since that, it is evident from the publication before us, those doctrines have appeared to him very differently, and following the convictions of his own mind, and the further light he has obtained from the perusal of the Scriptures, he has abandoned that system which he before defended. We congratulate Mr. T. on his escape from the regions of horror and death, through which is distilled a poison far more baneful than that said to proceed from the *Upas Tree* of Java. We regard the situation of every one as happy, who rejects the pestilential Doctrines of a system which represents God without mercy and leaves man without hope. Twice happy is he who escapes with the preservation of his mental powers, and is saved from the dreary abodes prepared for the most afflictive state to which human beings can be reduced. At present we shall only notice the manner in which Mr. T. refutes the popular doctrine of the eternity of future punishment. We shall refer to the other Questions on a future occasion.

Mr. T. observes, p. 57, that two of the principle arguments in favor of this doctrine are,

"First, the infinite nature of Evil."

"Secondly, the necessity of Eternal Punishment in the moral government of God, or the necessity of preventing, among superior intelligences the commission of crime, by the salutary dread which the everlasting punishment of the wicked is calculated to inspire."

The following is the manner in which Mr. T. reasons on the subject. p. 57—61.

"Here I at once join issue with the advocates and supporters of the ordinary system, by denying, in the most pointed terms, that sin or evil is infinite, and demand that the matter may be remitted to trial. The arguments for sin being infinite are,

"1. That it is committed against an infinite being. But this argument, however much vaunted, is in reality a mere sophism, calculated to impose

only on such as do not reflect, or are not capable of reflecting, for it is liable to objections which are completely fatal to it. 1st, If sin be infinite, it is possessed of a divine attribute or of the divine nature, infinity being an attribute of God, that is, in other words, sin, according to this scheme, is one with God. 2dly, Sin being the act of a *creature*, (or *a quality* of creature action,) and it never yet having been pretended that *creatures* are infinite, we have, according to this rational, luminous, and consistent system, the *acts of creatures* invested with an attribute which does not belong *to those by whom the acts are committed*. 3dly, If sin be infinite, it cannot in any case *come to an end or be removed*, the very circumstance of its termination or removal declaring it to be *finite*. 4thly, If sin be infinite, it cannot have had a beginning. But has this ever been alleged? How, I ask, are these four objections to be got over?

"2. That it required an infinite atonement. This argument likewise is a mere sophism, for, 1st. Was it by the human or the divine nature of the Lord Jesus that the atonement was made? If by the divine nature, then God suffered! the word atonement signifying the substitution of the sufferings of one being in the place of those of another. If by the human nature, then the atonement was not infinite. How will my opponents extricate themselves from this dilemma? Not surely by alleging, that although it was impossible for the divine nature of the Lord Jesus to suffer, it nevertheless imparted efficacy to the atonement made by his human nature, for this, besides being a barefaced *petitio principii*, or begging of the question, would, after being stripped of its disguises, and of the tinsel and unmeaning language, with which it is decked, either be saying, that God himself suffered—as I am unable to comprehend any way in which an atonement can be efficacious, if the definition of the word is to be adhered to, except by adequate suffering—or it would be saying nothing at all to the purpose, by assigning to the word atonement a sense different from that which it ordinarily bears. 2dly, If it be maintained, that *an infinite atonement* has removed *evil* which in its nature is *infinite also*, are we not then treated with the curious idea of *one infinite* bringing *another infinite* to an end? Who shall prohibit our calling this the climax of absurdity? Let any plain unlettered man, endowed with common sense, ask himself calmly and deliberately, what is implied in the word *infinite*? Is it not *absolute boundlessness of every description, a conditional or limited infinity*, like *a conditional or limited eternity*, being a perfect solecism in terms? What then is proved by the circumstance of sin, which theologians have been pleased to style *infinite*, being *removed or coming to an end*, except the impropriety and absurdity of the epithet applied to it, and the fact of its being in reality *finite* or *bounded*? On a point so obvious, it is needless for me to insist farther.

"Secondly, Another grand argument in support of everlasting punishment hereafter, is a supposed necessity for it in the moral government of God, or

a supposed necessity of preventing among pure intelligent beings the repetition of man's offence, by the salutary dread which everlasting punishment is calculated to inspire. In other words, God finds it necessary to punish the wicked everlastingly hereafter, for the purpose of restraining intelligent beings from transgression. I grant that this argument has obtained the sanction of some of the first names in the department of theology, and that it is at first sight exceedingly plausible, but when examined into, it will be found to evince the most intense, I had almost said incurable ignorance of the character of God, and of the nature and operation of divine truth. Let the following remarks be attended to, in confirmation of this.

1. God is not a wrathful or malignant being, cherishing vindictive feelings towards any of his creatures, but his nature is expressed in one word, Love. This we learn solely and exclusively from those lively oracles, in which he has condescended to reveal or make known his character. *God is love,* and *in this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him,* 1 John iv. 8, 9.

2 The immediate and necessary result of understanding the divine character, is the banishment of fear from the conscience—*There is no fear in love,* (in other words love implies confidence,) *but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment, he that feareth is not made perfect in love,* 1 John iv. 18.

3. This understanding of the divine character, or possession of the divine nature, is the source of all the genuine and acceptable obedience of believers. *If ye love me keep my commandments.* John xiv. 15. *For the love of Christ constraineth us—that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.* 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. It is also the grand principle on which by the mouth of his apostles God addresses his exhortations. *Beloved if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* 1 John iv. 11. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, &c.* Rom. xii. 1.

We have made the above extracts to the extent of the room we can afford. We had intended to have added some remarks on the contents, but they must be deferred to our next. In the mean time we strongly recommend the careful perusal of this pamphlet to our readers. Whether the orthodox phalanx in Liverpool will have the courage to attack Mr. T. is yet to be seen; we fear they will not.

TEST AND CORPORATION ACTS.

House of Commons, Tuesday, March 18th, 1828.

On Lord J. Russell's motion for a committee for the bill for the repeal of these acts, Mr. S. Bourne moved, as an amendment, the

insertion of a declaration that the party taking office would not use it to the detriment of the Established Church.—He was supported by Lord Eastnor.

Lord J. Russell contended for the total repeal, but would submit to the House.

Mr. Peel, in a long address, advocated the necessity of concession on the part of the supporters of the bill, in order to facilitate it progress elsewhere. He proposed the following as a preamble to the bill:

"Whereas the Protestant succession to the Crown is by the act for the further limitation of the Crown, and the better securing the liberties of the people, established permanently and inaviolably; and whereas the Protestant Episcopal Church of England and Ireland, and the doctrine, discipline, and government thereof, and likewise the Protestant Church of Scotland, and the doctrine, discipline, and government thereof, are established permanently and inviolably.

He would have every Dissenter, on taking office, to make the following declaration.

"I, A. B. do solemnly declare that I will not use any privilege, power, or influence, which I do now, or may hereafter, possess by this office, to overthrow or disturb the present Church Establishment of the United Kingdom, or injure or weaken the Protestant Church, or deprive it of any of those powers or privileges which it enjoys, as by law established."

The following is the substance of the two other clauses proposed by Mr. Peel:

"And be it further enacted, that every such Dissenter, on being appointed to office under the Crown, shall make this declaration in the presence of two Justices of the Peace; until he shall have made it, any official acts of his to be void."

"And be it further enacted, that every Protestant, elected to any office in a Borough or Corporation, be required to make the said declaration before two Justices of such Corporation, and, if he omit to make it, his election to be void."

Mr. Ferguson thought the declaration unnecessary.

Lord Althorp, Sir M. W. Ridley, Mr. Harvey, and W. Smith did not object to Mr. Peel's proposition, as it might lead to unanimity.

After a few words from Lord J. Russell, who did not object to

the amendment, Mr. Peel signified his intention to give the measure every support.

The bill, with amendments, was then agreed to *nem con.* ordered to be printed, and re-considered on Monday next.

Probably before our present Number is in the hands of our distant subscribers, these abominable statutes will have received their death blow in the House of Commons; and we entertain the hope that in our next Number we shall have to announce their complete abolition.

We copy the following passages from a speech delivered on this subject, in the House of Lords, by Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, in 1779. At which time the House of Lords wished to exact from the Dissenters a declaration of faith, such as the *wisdom* of their Lordships would frame for them!

In the first place, I give my consent most fully and sincerely to the Bill as it now stands, repealing all the penal laws against the Protestant Dissenters. The laws were, from the beginning, the disgrace of the national church. They were passed originally from no public-spirited, and from no truly religious motives. They were the produce of revenge, of a spirit of party and persecution, inconsistent with our national liberty, and our national character. To the repeal of these laws I consent most cordially; and, if the Bill is confined to that single point, I shall look upon it as the best proof of political wisdom that I have ever been witness to within these walls. But the additional clause, imposing a confession of faith upon them (short and general, and true, as it undoubtedly is,) has a very different complexion from the rest. I hope it will be here understood that a Protestant Bishop can have no possible objection to the declaring in his own person, that the Scriptures contain the revealed will of God and the rule of his faith and practice. This is evidently the most fundamental article of our religion; every other article depends upon the truth of it. I not only believe it, but I should have the virtue, if called upon, to seal it with my blood. And yet, my Lords, the most sacred truth I believe myself, I do not think that I have any right to impose upon other men. Only let it be remembered, that I acknowledge the truth of the declaration, and object solely to the imposition of it.

For let me observe, in the first place, that, by adding this clause, we convert the Bill, from being a repeal of all former penal laws, into a penal law itself; for those who do not subscribe the declaration, remain still exposed to all the old penalties.

The most pernicious principles to society, and the most repugnant to the spirit of christianity, that ever obtained a firm footing in this country, are the old Tory principles. The Dissenters are, at least, clear and innocent of this guilt. These principles, of late, have been carefully nursed and revived. They have almost ventured to appear at Court, but have shewn themselves, without disguise, in the ministerial writers. Let it be allowed me, with the most respectful tenderness, to admonish that learned body, to whom I owed the pleasures of my youth, and that foundation of science and useful literature, which I have since too little cultivated;—let me conjure them not to suffer those odious principles to revive again within their walls; which are as incompatible with true learning as they are with liberty. The men who have given up their love of freedom, and have forgot the natural rights of mankind have lost the best and most vital part—of the vigor and nerves of their understanding. They are neither able to discover truth, nor to relish science. No Jacobite was ever a philosopher

I shall end what I proposed to say, with observing, that the ruling party is always very liberal in betowing the title of Schismatics and Heretics on those who differ from them in matters of religion, and representing them as dange- to the state. My Lords, the contrary is the truth: those who are uppermost and have the power, are the men who do the mischief; the Schismatics only suffer and complain, and are often thought worthy of punishment for that very reason. Ask who has brought the affairs of this country into the present calamitous state? Who are the men that have plundered and depopulated Bengal? Who are they that have turned a whole continent, inhabited by friends and kindred, into our bitterest enemies? Yes! they who have shorn the strength, and cut off the right arm of Britain, were all members of the Established Church, all orthodox men.—I am not afraid of these tender and scrupulous consciences who are over cautious of professing or believing too much; if they are sincerely in the wrong, I forgive their errors, and respect their integrity. The men I am afraid of, are the men who believe every thing, and subscribe every thing, and vote for every thing.

Bishop Shipley's Works, vol. ii.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Anniversary of the Christian Congregation, Moor Lane, Bolton.

The Sixth Anniversary of this Congregation will take place on Easter Sunday and Monday, April 6th and 7th. The Religious Services will be conducted by the Rev. Henry Hunt Piper of Norton, near Sheffield, and the Rev. J. R. Beard, Manchester. The Congregation and Friends will dine together in Mr. Watson's Cloth Hall, on the Monday.

F. B. Wright, Printer, Liverpool.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—Jesus.

No 41, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d* MAY 1, 1828.

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

(Continued from p. 61.*)*

THE VISITATION OF THE SICK.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his church to absolve all sinners, who truly repent and believe in him: of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences; and by his authority committed unto me I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Here we have the popish doctrine of absolution. What priest has the power of forgiving sins? or will any church-man acknowledge such a power? Every consistent protestant will be shocked at such an unjust claim, and must wish that so impious a notion may be blotted for ever from the Liturgy of the established church. Oh, my readers! deceive not yourselves by supposing that because you have confessed your sins to a weak erring creature like yourselves, they are therefore forgiven. God alone can forgive his children; and you never can be assured that you are acceptable servants, or that your sins are blotted out, but by the plain declarations of scripture, on your bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, and becoming new creatures. While you may foolishly imagine that a priest has purified your soul by absolution, you may be an abomination in the sight of the Lord. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

Well may the Roman Catholic sneer at the Episcopalian, and exclaim, you are constantly railing at my church, and particularly at the doctrine of absolution; and yet you inconsistently retain many of its peculiar tenets, and at the most trying hour of a man's life, your priest tells him, that "he absolves him from all his sins."'

The order for the Burial of the Dead.

With the exception of a very few sentences, the Burial Service is scriptural and sublime. It must not, however, be unobserved, that "this one service is very improperly read at all funerals, whatever the age, circumstances or character of the deceased may be; yea though they are known to have been the most abandoned sinners and hardened infidels, and to have died without any signs of repentance: excepting they were unbaptized, self-murderers, or excommunicated, which last case very rarely happens. In this service, the minister is required to style the deceased, *our dear brother*, to express *a sure and certain hope of his resurrection* to eternal life—to thank God for having taken him out of the miseries of this sinful world."

There is another inconsistency in the Church of England, which must not be overlooked. In the Athanasian creed she damns all who deny the trinity, and notwithstanding this glaring piece of uncharitableness, her clergy are *obliged* to express over the body of a Unitarian (if his friends require it) "a sure and certain hope of his resurrection to eternal life."

A commination, or denouncing of God's anger and judgments against sinners, with certain prayers, as the Ordinary shall appoint.

I have no doubt that many of the offences stated in this service will be severely punished by God in another world: but I do not like the custom of a minister uttering so many dreadful curses. It has only the tendency of making the religion of Christ appear gloomy and vindictive.

Besides, it should be remembered, that these curses were denounced against the Israelites *only*; intending that if *they* broke

any of the laws mentioned in the xxvii chapter of Deuteronomy, they would be condemned as criminals, and be subject in this world to the punishments of the Mosaic law.

The Psalter or Psalms of David.

These Psalms are not at all equal to the translation of those in the Received Version of the Old Testament. It may also be observed, that many of the Psalms of David should not be addressed in the form of a prayer to the Almighty, by persons of the present day. Many of the supplications are of a vindictive character, and do not apply to the circumstances of a christian congregation. For instance, how ill adapted is the following expression for the mouth of any christian during the time of prayer: "Bring unto the Lord, O ye mighty, bring young rams unto the Lord."

Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea.

These two following prayers are to be also used in his Majesty's Navy every day.

I wish all the prayers of the Liturgy were as good as these two: then there would be no necessity for any animadversions: "O most powerful and glorious Lord God, at whose command the winds blow and lift up the waves of the sea, &c." I cannot sufficiently admire this sublime piece of composition. It is, in my opinion, by far the finest prayer in the Liturgy.

"O Lord of hosts, fight for us; that we may glorify thee."

The pious Dr. Toulmin has clearly shewn that by the term *hosts*, the sacred writers meant the heavenly bodies; and not the armies of kings and statesmen. The Deity is God of love, and not the God of war. War is, in fact, an abomination in his sight. It appears also from ecclesiastical history, that war was seldom or never practised by the primitive christians. "Neither Jews nor Christians," (says Mr. Fox in his Lectures,) "could serve in the Roman legions without incurring the guilt of idolatry." Philo says of the Esseans, "none among them can be found that manufacture darts, arrows, swords, breast plates,

or even such weapons as might be converted to bad purposes in time of peace; much less do they engage in any of those arts which are useful in war." The Esseans generally became christians (see Jones's Ecclesiastical Researches,) and their pacific principles sanctioned as they were by the language of Christ (Matt. v. 38, &c.) were adopted and adhered to generally by the christians for upwards of two centuries, being only abandoned by the same gradation that truth, simplicity, and purity were abandoned also.

Justin Martyr declares, "we fight not with our enemies," ascribes war without distinction to the instigation of the devil, and considers the prophecy of Isaiah (ii. 4,) as accomplished in its renunciation by the christians of his day.

Irenæus gives the same literal interpretation of that prophecy, and expresses the same notion of its being then fulfilled. "*Jam nesciunt pugnare.*"

Tatian intimates plainly his opinion concerning the unlawfulness of war, and contrasts soldiers and christians as in all respects opposite.

Cyprian says, "when a single murder is committed, it shall be deemed perhaps a crime; but that crime shall commence a virtue, when committed under the shelter of public authority; so that punishment is not rated by the measure of guilt, but the more enormous the size of wickedness is, so much the greater is the chance of impunity."

Tarachus, the martyr, says in his examination, "when I was a soldier I was called victor;—*because I was a christian* I renounced the service."

But in later times christians thought and acted difierently; and now, the union of the sword and the gospel, is deemed perfectly compatible with the christian character: though Christ himself said, "my kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

PURGATOR.

(To be continued.)

REVIEW.

Three Qnestions proposed and answered, Concerning the Life forfeited by Adam, The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Punishment, by the Rev. David Thom, (of Liverpool.) p. p. 110.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF ADAM'S FALL.

THE amazing fabric which has been reared on so slender a foundation, is indeed astounding to the man who dares to think. The consequence of the single transgression of our first father Adam, is the contamination of all his posterity, who by their descent from him bring with them into the world a nature, according to Mr. Wilberforce, "corrupt to the core;" and according to Calvin, their own damnation from their mothers' womb; and having the seeds of sin in their nature, are necessarily and unavoidably impelled to crime, which lead to and issues in the eternal damnation of nine tenths of the human race. Such is the orthodox gospel doctrine maintained by the major part of what is called the christian world. This doctrine Mr. T. has dared to impugn in the pamphlet before us. Mr. T. very justly observes that such doctrines "obscure, and are at variance with the character of the God of Revelation, representing *him* as a gloomy despot, whom [the] scripture declares to be LOVE itself;" and expresses the supreme happiness which he shall enjoy by "being instrumental in relieving such as are convinced by his arguments, from a state of the most degrading and painful thraldom, and of seeing the hideous fabric which, for eighteen centuries at least, men have been engaged in raising and consolidating, crumble into atoms at the touch of divine truth." To Mr. T. in this generous and noble undertaking we give both hand and heart, and say, "The Lord, even our God, prosper thy undertaking."

The following is the Question proposed, &c.

"What was the death threatened to, and incurred by Adam, as the consequence and Punishment of his first transgression?

"As the fall of man is a fact which we learn exclusively from the sacred writings, so likewise the nature of it, the circumstances connected with it, and the consequences involved in it can be derived only from the same infallible source. *What*, then, *saith the scripture* in reference to this subject?

Were it not that the minds of men are preoccupied from the very cradle, with nursery tales concerning the fall, and that the impressions made by these

are afterwards strengthened by systems of divinity almost as decidedly romantic, this is a question which might be speedily answered."

"When we inquire what are the declarations of the book of Genesis, concerning the creation and fall of man, the few following simple, and intelligible facts present themselves to our notice:—That God formed and organized the body of the first man *of the dust of the ground*, or of materials common to it, with the earth, upon which it was to tread,—that the body so formed was animated by him, with a principle of life, Genesis ii. 7.—that this life was not *absolutely* but *conditionally* bestowed, 16, 17.—that the condition of its tenure was violated, iii. 6.—and that thus the forfeiture threatened, viz, the loss of the life originally bestowed, and the returning of the body to its primitive elements, was incurred, 19. If words have any meaning at all, and if scripture is not to be made a mere nose of wax, what can be gathered from the inspired narrative, concerning the fall, and its consequences, more than I have now stated"

"Clear, however, as the matter appears to me, and must do to all who take a plain, scriptural, and impartial view of it, there have not been wanting men, dignified with the title of theologians, who have fancied, and written treatises to prove, that besides the loss of natural life, Adam was threatened with, and actually incurred spiritual and eternal death."

Mr. T. proceeds to notice some objections which may be made to his views of the subject. The first is, that the declaration was that Adam should die IN THE DAY, that he should eat of the forbidden fruit, but that he did not literally die, therefore it must be some other than natural life that was forfeited by the transgression. To this Mr. T. replies, p. 9,

"I consider God, in this, as well as in all cases, to be the best interpreter of his own meaning, and perceive, that he has furnished us with an interpretation of his meaning in this particular case, by the event. In the day, or time, or moment, that thou eatest thereof, i. e. *of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil*, thou shalt become mortal, or obnoxious to the stroke of death, I have no hesitation in proposing, as God's own solution of the difficulty."

The next objection is founded on the common notion of the duplex nature of man; which indeed were it true there could be no such thing as death take place among the creatures of God, for all are equally possessed of what is called a *soul*, and the same word is used in the original for the soul of a quadruped, or the soul of a fish or a fly, as is used for the soul of man.

Mr. T. has shown very clearly that the meaning of the original words נפש and ψυχη is nothing, like what is now connected with

the term soul; but means *breath*, and the chief secondary meaning is BREATHING. This Mr. T. confirms by a reference to Parkhurst who was not certainly favorable to such opinions as Mr. T. has advanced. The arguments on this head are summed up as follows.

"Perhaps all that I have been stating will be better understood, by the unlearned reader, if the verse itself, Genesis ii. 7, be analysed, and the several steps of the process there enumerated be pointed out. 1. God formed the body of Adam. *The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground.* 2. God conferred life on this body by enabling it to breathe. *And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.* 3. In consequence of this, that which had formerly been an inanimate lump, or mass, became a creature endowed with a principle of life, evinced by and connected with breathing. *And man became a living soul,* or a living breathing creature. In the whole process I can discover, from the text itself, nothing more than this."

The following part of Mr. T's. answer to His First Question is too important to be passed over slightly, we shall resume our remarks, &c. in our next.

A Plain Statement of the Evidences of Christianity, divided into short Chapters, with Questions annexed to each; designed for the use of Schools, Sunday Schools, and Young Persons.—By Francis Knowles.

We have had much pleasure in perusing this excellent little book, and think it well calculated to answer the end designed by its auther. It is admirably adapted to the capacities of children, to give them a rational and consistent view of Christianity, and to teach them how to appreciate the evidences in its favor. The author has been particularly careful to explain all the difficult words he uses in the text, by notes at the bottom of the page, this renders the work exceedingly valuable.

The work is divided into nine books, each book into short chapters, at the end of each chapter, are questions for the exercise of the pupil. We recommend it to our readers as at once excellent in its matter, judicious in its method; and what is no trifling consideration, exceedingly cheap in price.

ESSAY ON INSPIRATION.

(Continued from page, 95.)

It is foreign to the design of this Essay to enter into an elaborate and formal discussion of this doctrine; a doctrine that

may be refuted by accumulated proof from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, exclusive of what has been already deduced in abundance by learned and impartial men, (*) which of itself constitutes a collection of evidence, as complete and cogent as can be offered to the contemplation of the human mind. It is most surprising that writers of learning and sagacity can still persevere in their zeal for an opinion which is beset on every side with insuperable difficulties: when the contrary hypothesis reflects so much honour and importance on the Christian Dispensation and the Author of it. But it is still more surprising, that they can expect to overthrow such a mass of persuasive reasoning by the feeble efforts of one or two solitary arguments. (†)

Suffice it now to say, in the prosecution of our argument, in opposition to this doctrine of an intermediate state, that it subverts the fundamental article of our faith, nay, evacuates Christianity itself. If immortality, or the continuation of existence after death, (‡) be an inherent property of the human soul, it is falsely asserted by the apostle Paul, that *all men die* in consequence of their relation to Adam, and *will revive* on the great *day of the resurrection through Jesus Christ*. We may indeed have recourse to an evasive, though not unusual expedient on these pressing occasions, and explain away this capital, this essential truth, this bulwark of our faith, by the dexterous inter-

(*) See particularly Bishop Law's *Appendix*, in his Considerations, and a *Historical View of the Controversy concerning an intermediate State*.

(†) See Mr. Townson's *Discourses on the Gospel*, p. 179. This very excellent author produces, in confirmation of the doctrine of an intermediate state, the Parable of the rich Man and Lazarus, and contends that it is a true and consistent representation. But are not Lazarus and the rich man *in the body* and *out of the body* at the same time? Compare Luke xvi, 24, with 1 Cor. xv. 50. If the advocates for a literal acceptation of the parable in question should endeavour to elude this objection, by alledging, that this is merely a piece of embellishment necessary to the building up of the relation, why may we not extend this reasoning to the whole parable, and maintain it to be an emblematical representation, descriptive in general of the happiness and misery reserved for the virtuous and wicked in a future state?

(‡) I am aware of this contradiction in terms; but this doctrine in question is one too.

vention of metaphor, and call this a figurative death. But this mode of interpretation offers extreme violence to the language and the sense of Scripture, and supposes the most important articles of the Christian creed to be conveyed in figure. If, however, the death incurred through Adam by all mankind be figurative, the life and the resurrection achieved for us by Jesus Christ must be figurative too; so that our *faith is vain*, and our *hope* is also *vain*. These considerations amount to some presumption of mistake or misinformation on the side of Luke.

But if this piece of history be indeed authentic, the last difficulty, respecting an intermediate state, may be avoided, and the passage cleared up, by a different punctuation. '*Verily I say unto thee* THIS DAY, *thou shalt be with me in paradise.*'—As if he had said, I assure thee of a truth *even now, on this very day*—at a time when thou seest me in such a helpless state, in such circumstances of humiliation and disgrace; when there appears so little prospect of the accomplishment of my promise—*thou shalt be with me in paradise.**

Let the advocates of an intermediate state go now and call this a very bad interpretation! Let them still persuade themselves that the words *this day*, thus connected, have no tolerable force, and are no improvement of the sense, but a burden to it! We can only appeal to the unprejudiced reader to determine, whether any expression can be more significant and emphatical.

What shall we say to John's silence about this transaction? Is it not *mysterious?* especially if Luke's account be true, as the authentication of such a remarkable particular was certainly an object worthy of his attention. To this it may be replied, that it was John's intention to supply the deficiencies of the other Evangelists. But John has minutely related the whole business of the crucifixion, with much repetition of their accounts; and this very circumstance, left so ambiguous and undetermined in

(*) Jesus, no doubt, would speak intelligibly to the Thief; and learned commentators, particularly Lightfoot, have shewn that the Jews of that time understood by Paradise, the place of happiness in general reserved for the righteous, as contradistinguished from Hell, the place of torment; not of an imperfect intermediate state of expectation.

the former histories, was itself a deficiency, and demanded rectification. Perhaps, as he was under a necessity of contradicting *one* Evangelist at least, he acquiesced in this omission, rather than assert any thing that might tend in any degree to invalidate or disparage the records of the Gospel.

Before we dismiss the subject of this section, which might with ease be considerably enlarged by direct argument of fair inference from the Holy Scriptures, it will not be beside our purpose to remark into what embarrassment authors of distinction sometimes bring themselves, merely, as it should seem, through inconsideration, and a slavish habit of believing from authority and prescription. In discussing the present question in particular, their situation is very delicate and distressing. Much awkward labour is employed, much dexterous refinement called in, and many a saving qualification introduced, to preserve the equilibrium between the prevailing notion of inspiration, and the credit and inconsistency of the Evangelists.

A valuable illustrator of the Gospels above referred to, * may be included under this description, who appears to me, under no little perplexity, when he attempts to reconcile his positions and the discordances of the Evangelists with Inspiration and Infallibility. We will just advert to a few of his observations, that are applicable to the present subject. His example will suggest a salutary lesson to the young student of theology. If writers of such learning, ingenuity and discernment, can suffer themselves to be carried away by the current of popular opinion, with what circumspection should we guard in our earlier years against a passive and an unsearching disposition! With what care and scruple should we try even those doctrines which are universally adopted, at the touchstone of rational disquisition!

He endeavours to shew, and with great ability and success, that the variations of the Evangelists are solely the result of educational opinions, local attachments, incidental associations, or a judicious adaptation of their respective histories to the circumstances and exigencies of that denomination of Christians, for whose use they were more immediately intended. But if their acquaintance with the facts related by them was de-

* Mr. Townson.

rived from a *personal communication* with Christ himself, or their connection with those who had sufficient means of information; and if they gave, like all other authors of understanding, such a representation of these facts as they judged most prudent and efficacious; what is become of his *gift of inspiration?* What meaning can he possibly affix to these words? Do not these concessions utterly evacuate every supposable purpose of that gift in the Evangelists as writers? What is this, but to allow the doctrine of Inspiration in words, and proscribe it in reality?

In comparing two parallel passages of Mark and Luke, where Mark's relation is more circumstantial, Mr. Townson observes: The circumstance, that, when Jesus was gone forth into the way, there came one running and kneeled to him, is one of those little incidents that characterise the narration of a beholder. Of these there are many in St. Mark, which St. Luke would naturally omit.

But, may we not say, why should St. Luke naturally omit a striking and pathetic incident, when he must have been acquainted with it from Inspiration?—And for the same reason we may add, was it not superfluous in St. Peter to inform Mark of these minute particulars? Could the *gift* of the Evangelist receive any benefit from the *experience* of the Apostle? Besides, if each succeeding Evangelist had perused the preceding Gospels, as Mr. Townson thinks with the highest degree of probability, what could possibly induce a posterior writer to vary from his predecessor, and even to contradict him, but a well-grounded persuasion of some misinformation or mistake?

Other objections of the same kind present themselves: but I forbear; that no one may construe a regard for truth into a mean and malignant pleasure of carping at an author of great and deserved reputation, to whom both I and every lover of the Gospel owe many obligations.

Section VII.

Is detrimental to the Cause of Revelation.

If thou wilt make me an Altar of Stone, thou shalt not build it of *Hewn Stone:* for if thou lift up *thy tool* upon it, thou hast *polluted* it.—Exod. xx. 25.

THE doctrine of Inspiration appears to be injurious to the inter-

ests of the Christian Revelation, contemplated as a wise and reasonable institution, contrived by the divine mind for the use and contemplation of intelligent creatures, from a variety of considerations.

1. This opinion places the credibility of the Gospels upon a foundation very different from that of every other authentic and accepted history, by superinducing an extraneous motive of belief, which evacuates at once every species of attestation, historical, prophetical, and moral: and this peculiarity of evidence has an obvious tendency to lessen, and even to annihilate, that credibility.

2. This is an *irrational* hypothesis. For a previous persuation of this indisputable veracity, the perfect consistency, and the entire reasonableness of any narrative, must of consequence supersede all necessity, and even propriety, of examining its contents, and of investigating the claims of any theory, or detail of occurrences, which it may exhibit. We must receive its propositions without hesitation; not from any principles of legitimate conviction, but merely because it is inspired. This sacrilegious divorce of reason and revelation will unavoidably excite, even in minds not very sceptical and incredulous, some suspicions unfriendly to Christianity. They will be apt to infer, and not unjustly, an insufficiency of proper evidence for the authentication of that religion, which demurs at an appeal to the judicature of reason and common sense: and under the influence of this prepossession, they will hastily pronounce it an implement of political expediency, constructed to subserve the sinister purposes of ignorance, priestcraft, and superstition. Truth, they will say, is not afraid of exposing herself to the strictest scrutiny and the clearest light. Error alone, conscious of her deformity, flies for refuge from the eye of day to mystery and darkness.

3. Is it not *dishonourable* to the Christian revelation to suppose, that, with all the concurrent evidence of divine original, resulting from internal character and outward attestation, she still requires the accession of an artificial and rotten prop to support her strength?—I will even venture to affirm, that, though *none* of the four Gospels had been transmitted to our times, if

cotemporary authors of fidelity and judgment had given their testimony to the leading articles of Christianity, such as the life and death of Jesus, a general account of the purposes of his mission, and a summary of what he did and preached; all intelligent and reasonable men, considering the disconsolate and uncertain condition of the human race, the great dignity and importance of these truths, and their consonance to our natural and most improved apprehensions of the Supreme Being, would have perceived an irresistible inducement to acquiesce in the Christian scheme, even *thus* attested.—But it must not be imagined that I mean by this to infer the *inutility* of the Gospels: this would be a very unjustifiable and malicious insinuation. They are, indeed, an invaluable treasure; and the preservation of them, without material injury or adulteration, through the long night of literature, amidst the vicissitudes of human affairs, and the desolations of such miserable times, as succeeded, during many centuries, the promulgation of Christianity, is a subject of equal gratitude and exultation. But, I think I may reasonably infer, from this remark, that it is superfluous to attribute the gift of Inspiration to the Evangelists.

4. This doctrine *invalidates the authority of the Gospels as separate and independent testimonies.* For if the minds of the Evangelists were equally illuminated by an influx of light, derived from the same heavenly source, and displaying to their view in similar colours every object of contemplation, their united attestations can only be equivalent in value to the disposition of a single witness.

5. It countenances *a charge of combination and imposture,* and reduces the defenders of it to a painful dilemma.

There are undoubtedly variations in the Gospel histories: this will be universally acknowledged. If these variations cannot be adjusted, so as to constitute one uniform and connected story, but appear to be manifest repugnances, we cannot possibly admit the infallibility of the writers of such histories.

If these variations may easily be reconciled, and cleared from all show of contradiction, we can never hope to prevail upon inquisitive men to embrace such a gratuitous and embarrassing hy-

pothesis as that of Inspiration, and must acquiesce in their allegations of fraud, concert, or imitation. No arguments from those books whose pretensions are under discussion, will be accepted as legitimate ; and reason and probability are on the other side.—In this argument, I take it for granted to be improbable that *four* historians, without communicating with each other, can write *four* separate and circumstantial acoounts of a series of extraordinary events, from different sources of intelligence, without any variation. But, on the contrary, if we discard this inconvenient and vain supposition, and deduce the authenticity of the Gospels from rational and solid premises, the variations, which occur in them, will become no inconsiderable presumption of veracity and faithfulness. Artful copyists are anxious to transfer a perfect resemblance, and to preserve an unexceptionable consistency even in the minutest points. But little disagreements and contradictions, that are the natural consequences of human frailty, of different apprehensions, of dissimilar modes and even prejudices of education, of opportunities more or less advantageous for discovering the truth, and of a thousand inconceivable incidental circumstances, operating on the mind with imperceptible influence ; these are such intimations of artless conduct and upright intention, as must render the credibility of such writers unimpeachable and beyond suspicion. It is not necessary for me to enlarge upon this topic, which has been frequently illustrated by abler pens than mine.

6. Is it *conformable* to those sketches of the economy of Providence discernible in the Mosaic system, but more eminently conspicuous in the conduct of the Christian dispensation, to propagate a standing miracle, as it were, through every age of man? The Omnipotent Ruler of the Universe never interrupted the regular course of his administration, but on the most important emergencies, and for the accomplishment of wise and salutary purposes. Nor, even on these occasions, did He display the wonders of his power with a lavish profusion, but, if I may be allowed the expression, with a parsimonious liberality. These miraculous interferences were employed to ascertain the heavenly designation of our Lord and his Apostles, and to rouse the at-

tention of mankind to that glorious scheme of revelation, which HE was commissioned to proclaim and ratify, and they to vindicate and preach. But when this preparatory process was completed, no further supernatural intervention appears to have been either wanting or vouchsafed, in a single instance, after the death of the Apostles and their contemporaries. Christianity might then securely trust her claims to a fair and suitable representation of these stupendous facts, and to the unperverted sense of man. The Evangelists, however unlearned they might be, seem to have possessed qualifications competent to the transmission of what they had seen or heard to future ages: and posterity, in the examination of their histories, would have sufficient scope, if miracles were suspended, for the exercise of their moral powers, and for the display of some of the most transcendant virtues with which Christianity can adorn the hearts of men;—humility, and zeal, and hope, and faith; an end, which we may easily suppose the great Author of our Religion, from the uniformity of his conduct in this respect *might* have in view. '*Thomas,*' said HE to the incredulous Apostle, with some mixture of reproof, "BECAUSE *thou* HAST *seen me, thou hast believed:* HAPPY ARE THEY *who have* NOT *seen, and* YET *have believed.*'

(To be continued.)

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN AND A QUAKER.

DIALOGUE IV.

[*Continued from page 75.*]

Q. When we last discoursed it was of the spirit and our silent meetings.

C. Why, who can understand the use of your silent meetings?

Q. We do, and thou mayest. Friend, our devotion and holy exercises are not taken out of a book, but begin first at the heart; and when the heart dictateth not, we speak not. Our Godliness is not performed like a play, by rehearsal.

C. This is a villainous reflection upon the common-prayer.

Q. Thou makest it then. I am only defending the religious worship of the

people called Quakers; and I have defended it. I do not revile thy church exercise: why revilest thou me?

C. Who are they that perform their devotion by rehearsal, like a play?

Q. We do not: and is it not lawful to say, we do not? Knowest thou any that do?

C. We have a form of prayers, the best that ever was composed, and find great devotion in it.

Q. I rejoice in it; I like all devotion that is paid to God, and warranted by the scriptures. I find no fault with thine; only it is not meet for me, who find more fervency in my own, and more edification. And what is the end of devotion but edification?

C. Yes, the glory of God.

Q. God is not glorified, where men are not edified. Hence every man must glorify God his own way.

C. What, in an erroneous way?

Q. Those are words. No man errs who pleases God; who is, doubtless, pleased with our best endeavours to please him: knowest thou any better rule?

C. Yes, the rule of certainty.

Q. This is certainty. Other certainty than this is not found amongst men, who must all answer for themselves; and therefore must all worship God, as each thinks best.

C. Which would introduce a thorough anarchy in worship.

Q. So there is in faces; and what harm ensueth? God made faces different, canst thou make them uniform?

C. No; but minds are different from faces. The mind may be altered by reasoning.

Q. Sometimes for the worse, as well as the better; and so may faces be altered by good or bad keeping. But thou mayest depend upon it, minds will always vary as infinitely as faces; and for ought I know, more, as their substance is more delicate and quick, and knoweth no particular figure and dimensions.

C. There is, however, no harm in reasoning with them.

Q. I concur with thee, if that resoning be free from deceit, the next worst thing to violence, which ought never to be employed about the mind, which it can never change.

C. But in case of obstinacy and disobedience, what remedy is there?

Q. None. God only can judge the heart, which he only can see. Thou mayest see think me obstinate: but I declare sincerely I am not: and thou in charity oughtest to believe me. If thou dost not, thou art not a good christian; and if thou wouldest punish me, thou art no christian. I do not think that thou art obstinate, and adherest to opinions which thou dislikest; and I would not hurt a hair of thy head, no, not though I thought thee obstinate.

C. This is plausibly said; but God keep me out of thy power.

Q. I desire not to have thee in my power; I know the frailty of human nature, and the deceitfulness of power, which perhaps I might abuse. Wherefore I would neither have thee in mine, nor be myself subject unto thine.

C. Aye, but you are only a private man.

Q. Friend, all christians, as christians, are private men. There is neither high nor low in christianity, but in the degrees of christian perfections; and to found dominion in grace, is indeed fanaticism, as the clergy, in their disputes with the presbyterians, have justly called it.

C. Aye, but they meant civil power.

Q. Knowest thou any power in society but civil power.

C. Yes, certainly, power ecclesiastical.

Q. What to do?

C. To coerce and punish offenders against the laws of the church.

Q. What, in their bodies and property?

C. Without doubt.

Q. And is not this manifest civil power?

C. Yea, in its effect.

Q. Then it is in effect, and in truth, and entirely civil power, which christianity is a stranger unto; and which is an enemy to christianity, when it meddleth therewith.

C. How! are we not all subject to the laws of the church?

Q. To the laws of Christ, if thou pleasest; my conscience knoweth no other master: doth thine?

C. No: but my conscience tells me that there ought to be spiritual governors in the church.

Q. Governors are masters; and the conscience cannot be mastered.

C. What, not directed?

Q. If by direction thou meanest instruction, this has no relation to government. And all men that can instruct, ought to instruct.

C. What, without a call?

Q. To be able, is a sufficient call; and no call sufficient without ability.

C. But who shall judge of that call?

Q. He who hath it, and they to whom he ministreth.

C. The common people are rare judges!

Q. The commonest man is a good judge, whether he be edified by his preacher, or not.

C. Perhaps they are both enthusiasts.

Q. They may be pious christians for all that: if their affections be good toward God, they will certainly be saved.

C. Nay, I don't wonder at your charity for enthusiasts; it is but natural.

Q. I have charity for all men, as every true christian hath, even for thee. Art thou an enthusiast?

C. No: I am a member of the church of Christ.

Q. Shew it by thy charity. Thou has neither charity nor understanding, if thou wouldest exclude all enthusiasts from Christ's church.

C. They exclude themselves.

Q. Thy censure is passionate and cruel. No man chooseth to be an enthusiast, nor knows that he is. Wouldst thou damn him for invincible weakness?

C. What shall I do with him, if he will not be reclaimed?

Q. That is part of his weakness, and thou hast nothing to do with him. What wouldest thou have to do, where thou canst do nothing? Those who have conscience, know that it is not to be commanded nor plied.

C. A Whipping-post has sometimes worked great cures that way.

Q. Upon Hypocrites. Dost thou reckon conscience an evil? and would a whipping-post cure thee of thine?

C. You are an unmannerly fellow.

Q. Would that were the worst I could say of thee!

C. Sir, what can you say of me?

Q. What I will not say. I do not like thy example so well as to follow it; nor will I fulfil the character that thou givest me. I will only assure thee, that thou art not qualified to rebuke unmannerly language; and that for myself, I would rather want breeding than charity.

(To be continued.)

We copy the following from the New Series (No. iv.) of the Gospel Luminary, published at New York. The Editors belong to that denomination which in America is called the "Christian Society."

WE ALL DO FADE AS A LEAF.—Isaiah lxvi. 9.

WHAT a change has the frost of a single night made on the leaves and flowers! Yesterday they exhibited their luxuriant beauties; their freshness and verdure were unimpaired. I said they looked likely to continue for a long time in their summer beauty, but the frost has nipped them—the chilling blast has changed their beauties, and their blushing glories have faded. The sight of my eyes affected my heart. An unconscious sigh swelled in my bosom, and I exclaimed, "We do all fade as a leaf." Since the buds of these leaves and flowers unfolded their evanescent beauties, the young Aurelia was wedded, with every fair prospect of life and happiness. Her spring, her summer, her autumn, have all been included in a few short weeks. A

slight cold at first chilled her frame—the frost of death soon congealed the vital fluid—the blooming countenance faded—the sudden blast has shaken this beautiful flower from the stem, and now she lies mouldering in the earth.

The active and enterprising young man, whose soul was bent on business and wealth, left the house of his father since these leaves had acquired their growth ; a sudden disease has seared his countenance, which is now sallow and death-like. Like the leaf, trembling with every breath, he is just ready to drop into the grave.

In yonder dwelling resided the man of strength, whose firm constitution had bid defiance to forty chilling winters ; but the excessive heat of a day had wilted his whole frame. He faded and died before the evening breeze arose to cool the sultry air.

Behold that venerable brow covered with wrinkles—see these once strong and well-turned limbs now agitated by palsy. Listen to that once fluent tongue—regard the trembling steps of those feet that once trod with firmness, and dignity, and speed. Look at that once expressive countenance : how ghastly and dull ? Verily we all do fade as the leaf. Let us then seek for the renewing grace that the soul may rise and flourish in the image of the Saviour, and the frail body be clothed with immortal beauty.

On Wednesday, March 19th Mr. Warren Burton was ordained to the pastoral care of the Third Congregational Church and Society in Cambridge, situated at Lechmere Point, U. S.

The following hymn was written for the occasion, by Charles Sprague, Esq.

Our fathers, Lord, to seek a spot,
Where they might kneel to thee,
Their own fair heritage forgot,
And brav'd an unknown sea.

Here found their pilgrim souls repose,
Where long the Heathen rov'd
And here their humble anthems rose,
To bless the Power they lov'd.

They sleep in dust—but where they trod,
A feeble, fainting band,
Glad millions catch the strain, O God,
And sound it through the land.

Come, Lord, to this new temple now,
  Thy servant here behold;
In thy dread name he breathes his vow,
  To guard this little fold.

Long may he stand thy herald here,
  Thy lessons to impart;
From every eye to wipe the tear,
  The stain from every heart—

In paths of peace to bid them tread,
  Where no vain feuds arise,
And from his life a lustre shed,
  To light them to the skies.

So when the last long night shall go,
  The last glad morning break,
When all that walk'd in truth below,
  In joy above shall wake.—

There may thy servant, Lord, be found
  The chosen of thy Son,
And hear from him the glorious sound,
  "Well done, beloved one."

INTELLIGENCE.

Sixth Anniversary of the Moor Lane, Unitarian Christian Congregation.

On Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, 6th 7th and 8th of April, was held the Sixth Anniversary of the Unitarian Congregation, Moor Lane, Bolton. The Rev. H. H. Piper of Norton, near Sheffield, conducted the religious services of Sunday Morning and Evening, and the Rev. J. R. Beard of Salford, Manchester, those of Sunday Afternoon and Monday Evening. Collections to the amount of £21 19s. 4d. were made after the services of Sunday Afternoon and Evening, towards defraying the debt incurred by the erection of the School Rooms adjoining the Meeting House. On Monday 117 persons among whom were friends from Manchester, Stand, Knutsford, Liverpool, Preston, Warrington, Chowbent Newchurch and Padiham, sat down to dinner in Mr. Watson's Cloth Hall, the Rev. H. H. Piper, officiated as President, and Mr. Rigby as Vice President. After dinner sentiments were proposed and the meeting was addressed by the Revds. H. H. Piper, H. Green, J. R. Beard,

A. Bennett, J. Buckland, E. Hawkes, J. Cropper, and by Messrs. F. B. Wright, J. Brandreth, I. Barrow, and F. Duffield. On Tuesday the children educated at the Sunday School, assembled to the number of 120, to dine in the above mentioned Cloth Hall. After dinner some of the children recited pieces, and with suitable addresses from the Revds. H. Green, A. Bennett and J. Cropper, they received books as rewards for their improvement and good conduct during the last year. And we have reason to say that all who heard the very able and appropriate discourses of the preachers on the occasion, and attended the meetings of Monday and Tuesday, returned highly gratified. In the discourses of the Revd. Gentlemen there were a masterly defence of the christian doctrines, and a spirit of christian charity to all those who might differ from them in belief. At the meeting on Monday, there was that harmony, that liberality of sentiment, that continued flow of good feeling, which did credit to the purpose of the people assembled. They sought mutual encouragement in the work in which they have engaged, and an increase of their union and zeal in the Unitarian cause. This being the purpose of the meeting we may say without fear of contradiction, that few if any returned without being more firmly convinced that meetings of the above nature are calculated to further the christian cause, and establish a zeal becoming those who advocate the principles of Unitarian Christianity.

Somerset and Dorset Unitarian Association.

The Half Yearly Meeting of the Somerset and Dorset Unitarian Association, was held at Taunton, on the day commonly called Good Friday, 4th April. The service in the Morning was commenced at half past eleven o'clock, by the Rev. S. Walker, of Crewkerne, who offered up the introductory prayer and read the scriptures. The Rev. Mr. Whitfield, of Ilminster, followed in the prayer before the sermon; and the Rev. R. Cree, of Bridport, preached from Luke xii. 32. At three o'clock, a party of forty friends to the Cause of Unitarian Christianity dined together at the London Inn;——Warren Esq. in the chair. Friends were present from Exeter, Bridport, Yeovil, Bridgewater, Ilminster, Longport, Crewkerne, and various other places in the neighbourhood of Taunton. In the course of the Afternoon the meeting was addressed by several friends in a way tending to mutual encouragement in the faith once delivered to the saints. The Evening service commenced at seven o'clock, and was introduced by the Rev. Mr. Brown of Bridgewater; after which, the Rev. H. Acton delivered an excellent discourse, from 1 Thes. v. 19 The next Meeting was appointed to be held at Ilminster, on Wednesday, the 24th September, when the Rev. Mr. Horsfield, of Taunton is expected to preach.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES!

When ye see the fig tree put forth her blossoms, then know ye that summer is nigh.

The Annual Meeting of the Association of Independents, or Calvinists, of the district, was held at Bridport, on Wednesday, 9th April. At the close of the Morning service, notice was given, that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper would be administered, and, at the same time, all pious persons of other communions were invited to join them. Several of the people called Methodists accepted the invitation, and partook of the Supper with the friends of the Independent interest. In the Evening of the day, the writer of this notice attended the service, and was much pleased to hear an excellent prayer offered up to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, entirely free from any of the peculiarities of Calvinism. The sermon, in the same strain, was strictly practical, although the text, 1 John v. 4, might have been treated doctrinally. The only bit of reputed orthodoxy that occurred, was at the close of the service, when the blessing was pronounced in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. But, for this, neither the minister introducing the service, nor the preacher was accountable, as a different person delivered the final prayer. Perhaps he imagined that the services would be deemed, by some of the reputedly orthodox, very questionable, as to soundness of faith, unless they should be closed with a Trinitarian blessing. Certainly the liberal cause may be deemed to be making progress when we see the followers of John Calvin sitting down in open communion with persons of very different sentiments, and conducting their religious meetings with so little of the peculiarities of their gallic leader's faith.

KAPPA.

On the 11th ult. The Rev. W. Gaskell of Manchester College, York, was elected by the Congregation of Unitarians at Cross Street, Manchester, to succeed the late Rev. J. H. Worthington, as colleague to the Rev. J. G. Robberds.

Mr. F. B. Wright commenced, on Thursday Evening, April 17th, a Course of Lectures, on the History of Unitarianism and Unitarians, at the Unitarian Meeting-House Hunter-street, Liverpool, to be continued on Thursday Evenings. The first Lecture was introductory, including the evidences of the Unity of God afforded by Nature—The second Lecture was on the evidences afforded by the Holy Scripture of the Unity of God; to show that Unitarianism is the Doctrine of the Bible.—The following Lectures will be on the state of Unitarianism during the Apostolic age—thence to the Coucil of Nice.—Arianism—Socinianism, &c.—The history of Unitarianism from the Reformation to the present time.—The state of Unitarianism in England;—in North America—the East Indies—on the Continent of Europe, &c. &c.

SELECTED POETRY.

DEVOTION.

(From the New Monthly Magazine.)

"——— How poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art,
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's every grace, except the *heart!*"—BURNS.

On the breath of evening comes the hymn,
The hymn of the vesper hour,
Floating tranquilly through the twilight dim,
With the fragrance of the flower;
And many thoughts with the wild notes fleet
Of many a parted year;
And recollections sad and sweet
Arise and disappear.

There is magic great in that high-arch'd pile—
In the long aisles dark and chill,
When the full tones hang on the vaults awhile,
Like light on a sunny hill,
And the organ's swell with a thrilling sound
Makes the cluster'd columns shake,
And the pavement graven with names renown'd,
And the buried seem to wake.

Then the deep bell tolling overhead
A note from a loftier clime,
Seems to come as a voice from the mighty dead
That would mingle with present time;
And the full soul borne from the earth away
Hath forgotten its crimes and ill,
And expatiates as though no house of clay
Prison'd its boundless will.

And the full-robed choir in their garb of white,
The fancy may wildly dream,
Are spirits that bask in immortal light
From Heaven's own quenchless beam,
While their lips in their adoration's tone
Chaunt the holy song and prayer—
Oh who would think that the lip alone
Tenders Heaven its worship there?

Religion's pomp is the grace of art,
She dwells not in walls of stone,
But flies afar from the hollow heart
That worships in form alone:
Let the notes be grand, and the forms profound,
Even kings may consecrate,
She scorns the purple pomp and the ground
Where no heart-offerings wait.

Then give me the temple of air and sky,
With man's purple pomp forgot,
Where the soul springs upward exultingly,
And the trick of art is not;
By the craggy rock on the sea-beat shore,
To the music of the wave,
Or nigh by the rapid torrent's roar
Where tall pines darkly wave.

Where Niagara pours his watery world
In his black unplumb'd abyss,
More loud than a thousand thunders hurl'd—
Where God's great image is;
Or where the untrodden Andes rise,—
Where raging Hecla burns,
Or the Obi under Siberian skies
Thaws from his frozen urns.

Or at home by the smiling green-wood side,
My music the dashing stream,
The wild winds that hollow by me ride,
Whispering the holy name;
And creation all worshipping around
In harmony of praise,
With cheerful heart and with sight and sound,
Him of eternal days.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have received a communication in a printed form, signed "A Dissenter," too late to do any thing with in the present number. We will give it due attention, and a place, probably in our next, in whole or in part.

B's suggestion shall be attended to.

Before this Number reaches our Friends, they will have learned the news of the defeat of Bigotry and Intolerance, in the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.—We shall give as full a report on this subject in our next as our limits will permit.

Our correspondent "Omicron's" communication is unavoidably postponed to our next.

F. B. WRIGHT, PRINTER.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—Jesus.

No 42, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d* JUNE 1, 1828.

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

(*Continued from p.* 103.)

A form of Prayer with thanksgiving, to be used yearly upon the Fifth day of November.

It would be more to the credit of an enlightened government, and of a hierarchy that possessed liberality, to erase that part of the service from the Book of Common Prayer, which relates to "the happy deliverance of King James the First, and the estates of England; from the most traitorous and bloody intended massacre by gunpowder." It only causes angry feelings to spring up in the breasts of Protestants, against their Catholic countrymen, and to affix more deeply in the human mind those religious prejudices against Popery, which have already caused so much mischief in England and Ireland. If Catholics of James the First's reign were concerned in what is termed "gunpowder treason," * their conduct ought no more to be brought against

* There is no doubt that James hatched pretended plots against himself and government, for the purpose of destroying obnoxious individuals. The inspired Gower may be mentioned as an example; whose fate is not sufficiently known to posterity, nor the author of his murder imagined by the friends of legitimate monarchy. It has therefore been supposed, with considerable probability, that the gun-powder tseason was the mere fabrication of this pedandic and hard-hearted king, that he might bring into disgrace some unfortunate Catholics, and sacrifice the innocent victims of his enmity. Many strong facts might be brought forward to support this opinion, although it must be confessed that the major part of historians hold the popular notion concerning the origin of this celebrated conspiracy.

their descendants, than the bigotry of the Established Church during the reigns of the Stuarts ought to be alleged as a proof that its present members are persecutors and "bloody" enemies of the Dissenters. Unfortunately penal laws and plots have been the weapons of bigots of every religious denomination, and no christian believer can consistently take up a stone and cast it at his neighbour.

I cannot dismiss this subject without observing, that it is very inconsistent in the clergy to express their gratitude for the restoration of Charles the Second, and in this service to thank God that his brother James the Second, was driven from the throne. Surely the church is full of Vicars of Bray, who soon forget the setting sun, to worship the rising stars.

A form of prayer with fasting, to be used yearly upon the thirtieth of January, being the day of the Martyrdom of the blessed King Charles First.

Why Charles the First is called a martyr, must appear strange to every friend of the British Constitution. This King, as every one acquainted with the history of England must know, was a tyrant, a man who endeavoured to make Britons slaves, a persecutor of the Dissenters and the Scotch Presbyterians, a crafty hypocrite, and the cause of those civil wars, which so long desolated this island. A martyr, my readers, is a glorious character: one who sacrifices his life rather than renounce his conscientious opinions; one who, like Servetus, meets with undaunted resolution, a tormenting death, prepared for him by blood-thirsty bigotry. Will any person then presume to maintain that Charles laid down his life in so noble a cause, or that he died for the sake of religion? Why then, I again repeat, is he called a martyr? I answer, because he was great a friend of Church and State; and because his son treacherously forced the Presbyterians out of their livings, and gave them to parsons and rectors, although he had promised the former to protect their rights and privileges. *

* On Bartholomew's day, 1662, an Act took place, called the Act of Unifor-

O most merciful God, terrible in thy judgements, and wonderful in thy doings. &c.

Perhaps not one minister in five hundred, at the time he is thus solemnly addressing the Almighty, cares an atom about King Charles or his death. What then is such a prayer but an abomination in the sight of God, and a mere mockery of devotion? Alas! how wretched must be the situation of a conscientious clergyman, who believes that Charles the First was a tyrant, and his son a cruel libertine, to be obliged to repeat this prayer, or be liable to be called to an account by his Bishop. Yes, many clergymen are to be pitied. They are often compelled openly to profess doctrines which in their hearts they disbelieve, and perhaps detest. This gross abuse in the church calls loudly for reformation.

PURGATOR.

(To be continued.)

---

mity, "which," says a sensible writer, "required all ministers who would continue in the Church, or be admitted to livings, to use the same form of worship, to subscribe the thirty-nine articles, and declare their assent and consent to a new edition of the Common Prayer Book, before many of them could have an opportunity of seeing it."

The effect of this Act was seen in the integrity of two thousand worthy conscientious ministers. These ornaments of human nature, left the Established Church, and took their lot among the Dissenters; and from their number and distinguished conduct on the occasion, they may be considered as fathers of the Dissenting interest. The name of Puritans was now changed to that of Nonconformists.

In 1664 "the Conventicle Act passed, by which any person above sixteen years of age, present at any meeting for any religious exercise not according to the Church of England, where there were few or more persons besides the household, was for the first offence, to suffer three months imprisonment, or pay £5; for the second, six months, or pay £10; and for the third, to be banished for seven years, or pay £100; and in case of return or escape, to suffer death without benefit of Clergy."

"The year following (1665) the Oxford Act, or Five Mile Act passed, which restrained all dissenting ministers (on the penalty of £40) who would not take a most unreasonable oath therein specified, from coming within five miles of any city, town-corporate or borough, or any place where they had exercised their ministry, or from teaching any school."

THE DOCTRINE OF THE DEITY OF JESUS.

[*Continued from page* 84.]

THE doctrine of the Deity of Jesus is not only opposed to reason and common sense, but it is likewise absolutely irreconcilable with the leading *facts* of the New Testament. And,

First, *It is irreconcilable with the fact of Jesus being the* SON OF GOD. How, in the name of common sense, can Jesus be the son of God, and at the same time, be the very God whose son he is? Do not the terms Father and Son, necessarily imply two distinct beings? and do they not likewise convey the idea of prior and subsequent existence? Trinitarians indeed, tell us, that the Son was begotten from all eternity. But is it possible to imagine anything more egregiously absurd than this? A self-existent being *begotten*; and begotten *from eternity*, too! What nonsense: what a palpable contradiction. Really the doctrines of orthodoxy appear as though they had boen fabricated purposely to ascertain to what lenghts human credulity would extend, and what montrous and absurb propositions men would swallow. The New Testament knows nothing of this intolerable jargon of the *eternal sonship of the man of Nazareth.*

Secondly, *The Deity of Jesus is irreconcilable with the fact of his being* A MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN. A mediator is one who interposes between two parties. Jesus, therefore, to be a mediator *between* God and man, must be a being as distinct from God as he is from all other men. Trinitarians cannot possibly reconcile this fact with their system. It will not do to say that it is the human nature of Jesus that is the mediator: because the human and divine natures, we are told, constitute but *one* Christ; and because such downright nonsense as this, the human nature of God is a mediator between his divine nature and men, will never satisfy any one who has escaped from the bewildering labyrinths of orthodoxy.

Thirldy. *It is irreconcilable with the fact of Jesus being exalted to* THE RIGHT HAND *of God.* Jesus, we are told, is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Does not this necessarily suppose him to be a distinct being from the God at whose right hand he sits? By what figure of speech can a being

be said to sit at his own right hand? It will by no means lesse the difficulty, to say that it is the human nature that sits at God's right hand: because this is no more than saying that one part of God sits at the right hand of another part of God,—which is too absurd to be admitted for one moment; and because, as was observed before, we are told that the human and the divine natures form but one Christ, and are so united as never to be divided: consequently, one can never be said to sit at the right hand of the other.

Lastly.—*It is irreconcilable with the* UNITY OF GOD, *with the* SOLE DEITY OF THE FATHER. That *God is one*, is a doctrine taught by nature; approved by reason; and abundantly confirmed by the declarations of scripture. Its truth is unhesitatingly assented to, in words at least, by all ranks and denominations of Christians. Under the Jewish dispensation, the Divine Being was known by the name *Jehovah:* but Jesus has revealed him to us under the kinder appellation of *Father*. He hath told us, too, that it is the very same being whom the Jews worshiped as God, that he declared as the Father. Addressing the Jews, he says, "It is my Father that honoreth me, of whom ye say that he is your God." Now, as Moses and the prophets have declared that there is no God besides Jehovah, the being whom the Jews reverenced as the creator of the heavens and the earth, and as Jesus hath affirmed that the Father is that identical being, the conclusion is irresistible, that the Father is the *only* God. Indeed, Jesus hath affirmed this in so many words. Bowing in solemn adoration at the throne of his Father; he says, "This is life eternal, to know *thee* the *only* true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." It is true, the Right Reverend Father in God, the present Lord Bishop of Chester, Rector of St. Botolph's, Bishopgate, and Archdeacon of Colchester, hath told us, "There is no contradistinction, in this passage, between God and Christ; but between the one true God, and the false gods of the heathens." It may be considered presumption in me to differ from this learned doctor; but it is possible even for a right reverend father in God, to be mistaken, though he be a rector, and an archdeacon withal; and, with all due refer-

ence to this *great* personage, I must affirm, that there could not possibly be a greater contradistinction drawn "between God and Christ," than this passage presents,—not only in the words, but inasmuch as that a being who prays to God must necessarily be distinct from the God to whom he prays. What should we think of a man, who on beholding an assembly of christians bowing down before the Majesty of Heaven, and acknowledging him to be the only God; would affirm "there is no contradistinction" manifested, in this act, between God and them, "but only between the one true God, and the false gods of the heathens?" Again, suppose George IV. were to send an ambassador, say Wellington, to some foreign court; and he were to write a letter to the King and say, "It is necessary to acknowledge thee the only king of England, and Wellington ambassador whom thou hast sent." What should we think of the individual, even though he might be a right reverend father in God, who would assert, "There is not, in this passage, any contradistinction" between the King and Wellington; "but between the one true" King of England and foreign pretenders? Should we not think he was only fit for a lunatic asylum?—But these are not the only passages which declare the Father alone to be God: all the passages which speak of the Divine Being under the appellation of Father, do so by implication. But there are many which affirm it positively: "My Father which gave them me *is greater than all:*" "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no not the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only;" "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;" &c. Now, Jesus always distinguished himself from the Father: "It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true; I am one, that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me;" "Now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father;" "My Father is greater than I;" "I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and unto my God and your God." And the apostles, even after the resurrection of their master, always continued to distinguish him from the Father, from God: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus;"

" The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his son Jesus: " " The head of Christ is God; " I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," &c. Even Trinitarians themselves have always distinguished the Son from the Father, and placed him *second* in their imaginary trinity. Jesus, then, having told us that the Father is the *only* God, and having always distinguished himself, and been distinguished by his apostles, from the Father, he cannot be God at all: it is, therefore, a violating the unity of of God, of the sole Deity of the Father, to raise him to the throne of Omnipotence, and to pay to him the adoration due to God alone. It were better for christians to " Worship the FATHER in spirit and in truth. He seeketh such to worship him."

OMICRON.

QUERY.

Is the title " Son of God," applied to Jesus of Nazareth as one of the human race; and why?

ALPHA.

ESSAY ON INSPIRATION.

(*Continued from page*, 119.)

Section VIII.

The true State of the Case exhibited.

With respect to the two apostolical Evangelists, John and Matthew, I apprehend the true state of the case to be this:—

On the first summons from our Lord to relinquish their occupations and to attend his person, they obeyed the peremptory call without reluctance or delay; not as it should seem, from any irrational and involuntary impulse, but from motives of firm, if not deliberate, conviction: won over, in all probability, either by the wisdom and authority of Christ's discourses, or the signal manifestations of Divine power which He displayed before them. Their implicit obedience was an indisputable proof of

an ingenuous and teachable disposition, aspiring after truth, and ready to embrace every opportunity of information and improvement. But hereditary prejudice and extreme bigotry, characteristic of the Jewish nation, were closely interwoven with all their sentiments and affections. They were as yet absolute strangers to the character of their Master and to the genius of that dispensation, which HE was delegated to disclose, and establish among men. Nor does HE appear to have been solicitous to give them at first a clear knowledge of his own purposes, and the nature of their designation. A full explanation of his office, and the spirituality of his religion, of the approaching abolition of the Mosaic ritual, and the destruction of the Temple with all the solemnities of their worship, which they regarded with so much reverence, as of unchangeable institution and eternal obligation; a foreknowledge of the destination of himself, the Great Messiah, to the afflictions of humanity in every form, and, above all, to the ignominious and accursed death of a malefactor on a tree; a prospect of their own future condition, of the calamities and dangers which awaited them in the profession and propagation of the Gospel through the world; the necessity of imposing a perpetual restraint on the solicitations of sense and passion, of relinquishing the most tender and innocent attachments of friendship and consanguinity, and even the unblameable propensities of human nature, for the love of truth; of exchanging the joys and comforts of this life for the bitter cup of inexhaustible sorrow and untimely death;—such unexpected, such unwelcome, such incomprehensible intelligence, would have given too violent a shock to their prejudices and feelings, nor could have failed to be a very hazardous trial of fortitude and fidelity more determined than their's.

If indeed such a mode of conduct had been agreeable to the will and consistent with the views of Providence, an immediate infusion of light and strength from above might have adjusted the matter at once without further trouble, by effecting a radical extirpation of their errors, by expanding their hearts to a size adequate to the comprehension of these momentous truths, and by supplying a portion of intrepidity and patience, sufficient to

encounter every difficulty that might occur in the profession and vindication of them. But neither is this the ordinary procedure of unerring wisdom, nor a conduct adapted to the exigencies of a being placed in a state of dependence and probation. It is no trivial recommendation of the excellence of Christianity, to have effected by gradual approaches such a signal triumph over the combined powers of habit and inclination: nor is it unreasonable to conclude, that JESUS CHRIST, the WISDOM of GOD, might have this purpose under contemplation, and intend to demonstrate, by this conspicuous example, the energy of Christian truth; a purpose, which supernatural and compulsive conviction must of necessity have precluded. Our Lord invariably appealed in all his public addresses and private discourse, to the genuine feelings of the uncorrupted heart, and gave full liberty and employment to every faculty and disposition of the soul. He neither wished nor attempted to *force* into belief that stubborn prejudice and untoward pride, which, the more they are solicited, set themselves the more in opposition to the truth. His constant address to his audience corresponded to the uniform tenour of his actions: '*Whoso hath ears to hear, let him hear!*'

During his ministration in the flesh, HE gradually unfolded himself to his disciples, and particularly to the twelve, in proportion to the strength of their capacities, from time to time; and was continually preparing their minds, by oblique and incidental instruction, for an unreserved communication of the new and sublime doctrines of the Gospel. The Most High is pleased on many occasions to magnify the glories of his wisdom and power by the imbecility of the instruments employed in the execution of his will. A stream of light is more splendid and distinct in the midst of surrounding darkness. In conformity to this constitution of the Divine government, the Apostles appear to have been men of no extraordinary capacities, of few, and those moderate, acquirements; and on this account, the more pertinacious of their national and religious peculiarities. With a candid simplicity, which, perhaps, has no parallel in the annals of mankind, they bear frequent testimony to their own dulness

of apprehension and incurable perversity; defects, for which they are so constantly reproved and so repeatedly instructed by their benevolent and patient Master. But all his reiterated declarations, and the clear notices he had given, on various occasions, of his approaching sufferings and death; nay, even that emblematical solemnity prefigurative of the breaking of his body and the shedding of his blood, operated with so little efficacy on their affections, that immediately after the celebration of this moving ceremony, with a stupid obduracy, bordering upon infatuation, they were still anticipating the joys of pre-eminence in an earthly kingdom, and were canvassing, with a mean and frivolous ambition, their pretentions to superior distinction, on the right hand and on the left, on the throne of their dying Redeemer. Nor could that last scene of anguish, which removed the expected deliverer of Israel from his terrestrial existence, nor the additional information which HE gave them in several personal appearances among them after his resurrection, entirely dispel the gross cloud of prejudice that involved their understandings. '*Lord,*' said they, in the fond language of aspiration after worldly greatness; '*Lord wilt thou restore* AT THIS TIME *the* KINGDON *to Israel?*'

It is most evident, that a set of men labouring under the influence of such passions and misconceptions, could not be, in their present state of temper and apprehension, proper instruments for the conversion of a dissolute and idolatrous generation to a religion of humility, love, and peace, either by their preaching or their example. The relinquishing of every valuable enjoyment, of every pleasing prospect in this sublunary scene, and a patient endurance of poverty, reproach, and affliction, in the saddest forms and in instances the most trying to human feelings, for the distant expectation of future happiness in reversion, was an alternative but ill-suited to their visionary projects of terrestrial ambition. Nothing but the irradiations of the illuminating Spirit of God could purify and invigorate such obstructed and unstable minds. For this purpose, and for the more effectual promulgation of the Gospel, they were instructed, by an express promise, to expect the illapse of that heavenly

visitant; a promise, which received its full accomplishment on the day of Pentecost. Under the operation of this animating power, which the occasion so loudly demanded, they perceived within themselves a degree of confidence and conviction, of understanding and intrepidity, unknown before. The great gifts with which they were endowed, the astonishing miracles which they were enabled to perform, and a conscious sense of the energy and superintendance of the heavenly advocate, inspired them with such zeal, alacrity, and fortitude, as led them to address in public the multitudes of Jerusalem, and to hold out, as the promised and expected Messiah, that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they, and their priests and rulers, had so lately accused, as a criminal, to the Roman governor, and had seen expiring on a cross.

Such were the offices of that HOLY SPIRIT, which CHRIST sent down from *his Father and their Father, from his God and their God;* to work miracles to strengthen their resolution, enlarge their ideas, and *to call to their remembrance* the things which they had been told before. But in every other respect,* and on every occasion when the interests of Christianity did not immediately interfere, the apostles were frail and fallible, like ordinary men, resigned to the guidance of their own uninfluenced judgment; as is sufficiently clear, without circumstantial proof, from the Acts and other parts of New Testament.

Nor was this agency of the Spirit of God upon their minds of such efficacy, I apprehend, as to superinduce an universal and unlimited acquaintance with religious and moral truths in all their connections and dependencies. It were sufficient, if HE communicated such a portion of information as would satisfy the peculiar exigencies of the various situations in which they might be called upon to act or to suffer. However, it is most certain, that after no inconsiderable alteration had been effected in their general conduct as preachers of the Gospel, we may observe in some of them a narrowness of thought, and a prudential tempo-

* Since the writing of the above, I perceive that the excellent Dr. Watson has made some similar reflections in the second Letter of his Apology for Christianity.

rising circumspection, or rather a degree of hypocrisy, very unworthy of the Apostles of Jesus Christ: which manifestly shews, that whatever changes had been wrough in them as ministers of the word, they were still beset with the passions and infirmities of men. Nor shall I be afraid of advancing it as my opinion, that many Christians in succeeding ages have been possessed of dispositions more benovolent and God like, of understandings more liberal and enlightened, and have walked, in all respects, more worthy of their vocation, than most of the twelve Apostles.

Now an author of integrity and good sense, who sets himself to compose a history of some distant period, takes care to collect his materials from the most undoubted records and the most authentic information. If he design to exhibit merely a detail of such transactions as have fallen under his own immediate notice, he relates them without exaggeration or disguise, to the best of his judgment and recollection; and is particularly cautious, in either case, to advance nothing as fact, without substantial evidence. An eye-witness, who proceeds with such circumspection, without intermixing his own private opinions with his narrative, is no more liable to deception than his external senses: one, who relates upon the credit of another's information, *must* be exposed to error and mistake.

We may easily perceive the aspect which these observations have on the histories composed by the Evangelists. Matthew and John, by reason of their constant attendance upon the person of our Lord almost from the commencement of his ministry, were, in point of information, perfectly qualified to record those scenes, in which they had been conversant, and had acted so conspicuous a part. This task they executed in the most satisfactory and proper manner. They delivered, not a visionary system of ingenuous conjecture, no intricate and refined theories, but a simple narrative, in a familiar and inartifical style, without rhetorical embellishment, without digression, without argumentation, without inferences, without remarks: but with every internal character of credibility. The most inattentive survey of these singular histories must lead us to acknowledge 'the wisdom of God' in the appointment of such instruments for this

work, and in condescending to consult the necessities of the unlearned and far greater portion of mankind. But we cannot conceive any form of history, or any kind of composition, that would require less ability and ingenuity, than those in which they have executed their Gospels. These compositions are altogether such as we should have previously expected from the authors of them, considering the meanness of their occupations, the mediocrity of their acquirements, and their sphere of life. They were not unconscious, we may presume, of their unimproved understandings and their numerous infirmities, both as men and writers. They wisely forbore expatiating beyond the proper limits. They adhered to ocular proof, or the most unsuspected information. They consulted the utility of others more than their own fame, and would not hazard an intermixture of their private opinions, prejudices, and preconceptions, with the truth.

If Mark composed his Gospel under the eye and by the direction of St. Peter, his authority is in all respects equivalent to that of an apostolical evangelist.

Luke wrote, as we may infer from the tenour of his introduction, and his silence with regard to any other source of knowledge, from the testimony of others. This necessarily compels us (as before observed) to make some deductions from the credibility of his Gospel, as testimony is weakened by transmission in a regular proportion to the number of successive relators. But some may think, that his inferiority in this particular is partly compensated by those indications of superior abilities and discernment, which they have described in the texture of his history. And indeed, on this account, and because of the many beautiful parables and other important relations with which this Gospel is enriched, and its peculiar adaptation to the circumstances of the Gentiles, which is conducted throughout with exact attention and singular ingenuity; it is, perhaps, as valuable to us as any of the four.

And here we might not improperly terminate our disquisitions, having taken sufficient scope for the contemplation of this subject, in endeavouring to prove that the doctrine of a plenary and infallible inspiration, attending and controlling the Evangelists

in every conjuncture of their lives, and particularly in the composition of the Gospels, is a factitious and unwarrantable assumption; as such a gift appears to be unnecessary,* inexpedient and improbable,† disclaimed by the Evangelists themselves‡, inconsistent with a comparative view of the Gospels,‖ and injurious to the interests of the Christian revelation.§ But as the Epistles of St. Paul compose a large and important part of the received canon of the New Testament, and as the singularity of his case may be thought an invincible objection to the preceding conclusions, it may be of service to enter into a distinct and careful consideration of his character and pretensions.

Section IX.

The Character and Pretensions of St. Paul considered.

We shall coincide, I presume, with the suffrages of all reasonable and candid judges, when we pronounce Paul to have been a man of a vigorous and well-informed understanding. He had, in all probability, made a very considerable proficiency in Jewish learning, under the tuition of his eminent preceptor; and his writings, few and unostentatious as they are, betray an elegance of taste, which had indulged itself in occasional excursions into the walks of Grecian literature. We may suppose him, with reason, to have been unacquainted with the doctrines of Christianity before his conversion, except from the partial misrepresentations of common fame among his countrymen. His original acquaintance, therefore, with the true character of Jesus Christ, and with the genius of the Gospel, was, doubtless, the sole result of supernatural communication. But his intimate knowledge of the scriptures of the Old Testament and of the evidences of Judaism, seconded by his inquisitive disposition, and illustrated by the light of Gentile literature, would be of material service to him, after his mind was purified, and his tem-

* Sect. III. † IV. ‡ V. ‖ VI. § VII.

per had received a right direction, by the superinduction of Christianity. Let us, then, examine what authority his writings carry with them, and whether he asserts to himself more than human credibility. We will first consider some particular passages of his Epistles, which have been thought to vindicate the gift of inspiration to *all* the canonical books both of the Old and New Testament.

'*But continue thou in the things which thou learnedst and wast assured of, considering of whom thou learnedst them;*

'*And that from a Child thou hast known the* HOLY SCRIPTURES, *which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through Faith in* CHRIST JESUS.

'*Every Scripture* is *given by inspiration of God, and* is *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*

'*That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.*' *

1. I observe, that these holy Scriptures, with which Timothy had been conversant from his infancy, could not be any writings of the New Testament, as the publication of none of them has been fixed by any sacred chronologer at so early a period.† The expression, therefore, must be restrained to some writings of the Old Testament. This single remark might suffice for the present purpose; but it may not be amiss to add,

2. For this reason, the phrase '*Which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through Faith* IN CHRIST JESUS'—must mean, 'which can give thee such information as will lead thee unto just apprehensions of the salvation proclaimed by the Gospel; a salvation not be attained but by the mean of faith in Christ Jesus.'

3. And what are those writings of the Old Testament, which are worthy of this distinction, and are so peculiarly calculated to communicate just conceptions of the saving dispensation of

* 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15, 16, 17.

† See Acts xvi. 1. If Timothy was only *twenty* years old then, which is a very fair supposition, he must have been born about the time of our Saviour's Crucifixion.

Christianity? The Prophecies undoubtedly lay claim to the characteristical pre-eminence. They inculcate more spiritualised and sublime ideas of the Supreme Being, of his nature, his government and his perfections, than most other books of the Jewish Scriptures. They insist, with the greatest earnestness and freedom, on the insufficiency and unimportance of external discriminations, and ceremonial devotion, unsanctified by active piety, integrity of conduct, and purity of heart. They foretel in more explicit terms a future and better dispensation 'in spirit and in truth,' and delineate with unambiguous, and even circumstantial exactness, the life and fortunes of its commissioned Establisher, the Messiah. They give, in short, some intimations of a future period of retribution to the whole race of man according to their works, and a more exalted sphere of existence after the termination of this mortal life. Stupendous truths! not at all delivered, or but enigmatically adumbrated, in the Pentateuch, and the historical parts of the Old Testament.

4. Whether we read with some interpreters, *All scripture, divinely inspired,* is *also useful*—or with others, *All scripture* is *divinely inspired, and* is *useful*—will be immaterial; since the context leads us, in either case, to understand the expression, as particularly respecting the prophetical books of the Old Testament. With this passage, therefore, the Evangelists and apostolic writers have no concern.

(To be continued.)

COBBETT'S HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION.

The Madrid Gazette announces a Spanish Translation of Cobbett's History of the Reformation, by M. Chalameau de Verneuil, dedicated to the infant Don Francisco Brother of the King. A most pompous eulogium is bestowed on the original. "The production," says the Gazette, "of Sir William Cobbett, which has made the most powerful impression in favour of the Catholics through all parts of the British Empire."

Did ever any other human being obtain so transcendant an honour as our *Sir* William, when we consider the enlightened character of Ferdinand?

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN AND A QUAKER.

DIALOGUE V.

(Continued from page, 122.)

C. I perceive my censure of your brethren, the enthusiasts, touches you.

Q. With compassion for thee, who art the greatest enthusiast that I ever met with.

C. Hey day! Mr. Pert: what, is your head turned?

Q. I am going to shew thee that thine is; for reasoning hath no manner of effect upon thee; and thou reckonest every man who is out of thy favour, to be moreover out of the favour of God. All which is manifest enthusiasm, and the worst part of enthusiasm, the enthusiasm of monks and dervises, of bigots and persecutors of all sides and sorts.

C. Thou art a very merry fellow.

Q. I am not merry: thou makest me melancholy to see such an antichristian spirit in thee.

C. Are you really in earnest, when you charge me with enthusiasm?

Q. Thou chargest thyself, by declaring for persecution; a crime against the very essence of christianity. If thou art not an enthusiast, thou art worse:

C. Why, I tell you, I am an enemy to enthusiasts.

Q. In that very thing thou art one. Thou art an enthusiast against enthusiasm. If enthusiasts hurt not thee, why shouldest thou be their enemy?

C. I am sure you talk like a wild enthusiast.

Q. So thou sayest, but thou provest nothing. I talk against persecution.

C. To punish disobedience to our spiritual governors, is, forsooth, persecution!

Q. I thought I had already shewn thee the vanity of thy language about Spiritual governors, which words contradict each other. None but God can govern the spirit of man. All government amongst men is human government, which meddleth only with the peace and property of society: when it would controul the consciences of men, it invadeth the jurisdiction, and usurps the prerogative of the Almighty, and is guilty of persecution.

C. But don't you disturb the peace of the church, which is part of the government?

Q. We ourselves are part of the church of Christ, and give no disturbance to the rest; and if thy pride be disturbed at our christian liberty, the scripture condemneth thee. We cannot,

as we are christians, sacrifice our conscience to any man's ambition. Can a peaceable compliance with private conscience disturb any man who hath the spirit of Christ? The business of religion is to find a way to heaven: art thou disturbed because I choose that which appears the shortest, and which to me is the only comfortable way?

C. But if you be in a wrong way, and I would compel you into the right way: I do you no injury, but real service.

Q. Friend, hast thou ever been there? And have not I the same written directions from the inspired men of God as thou hast, about the length and difficulty of the road? If thou wouldest take my divine rules for travelling out of my hand, or force thyself upon me for a guide, and drive me into a road which I do not find in my book, and make me pay for all this; I shall suspect thee for mine enemy, and for a freebooter, who wouldest carry me out of the way into a wilderness, to rob me. Let me ask thee a question: wouldest thou be compelled to accompany me in my journey heavenward?

C. No, faith, for two unanswerable reasons: first, you are not going thither.

Q. I dare neither think nor say the like of thee: only thy road is not my road.

C. Secondly, you have no warrant to compel me.

Q. Thou speakest truth: no man hath a warrant to force faith, or to carry another man's conscience.

(To be continued.)

REVIEW.

Three Questions proposed and answered, Concerning the Life forfeited by Adam, The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Punishment, by the Rev. David Thom, (of Liverpool.) p. p. 110.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF ADAM'S FALL.

THE horrible consequences which religious men, men interested in upholding a craft by which they get their wealth, have attributed to the suppposed fall of our first parents, are sufficient to shocks the minds of all who think properly on the government of God, and the goodness of his character. The marrow of this *scriptural* doctrine as it is called may be found in the confession of the Church of Scotland, where it is said that "mankind are more subject to death, with all miseries; spiritual, temporal and eternal. It is supposed that Adam by his transgression in-

curred spiritual and eternal death. To this Mr. Thom replies as follows—see p. 19—29.

1, What is spiritual and eternal cannot be lost, or forfeited. *Spiritual* and *eternal* are terms evidently of the same import with *divine*. As God is defined by Jesus in John iv. 24, to be a *spirit*, or rather *spirit itself*, *spiritual* therefore is that which belongs to, or can be predicated of God; and as to *eternal*, eternity is too obviously a divine attribute to admit of any dispute with regard to the being to whom it is solely, and properly applicable. *Spiritual* and *eternal life* is, then, *the life of God*, or *the divine nature*, and as wherever spiritual and eternal life is enjoyed by any creature, it must be in consequence of the divine nature being possessed by that creature, to maintain that such a life may terminate, or be forfeited, would be to maintain that the divine nature may come to an end, a proposition too absurd and extravagant to be for a single moment listened to.

2. The hypothesis of Adam having incurred by the fall spiritual and eternal death, implying his previous possession of spiritual and eternal life, cannot be maintained without confounding the nature and character of Adam with the nature and character of the Lord Jesus.

It is, as I have already shown, the express declaration of holy writ. Rom. v. 14, that Adam *was the type* or *figure of him that was to come.*

3. If Adam originally possessed spiritual and eternal life, and lost it by the fall, then is the Gospel represented as a mere remedial, or restorative scheme, It is impossible to gainsay this, for if, as is uniformly allowed, Jesus bestows spiritual and eternal life upon his people, and if Adam enjoyed this in his state of innocence, then Jesus merely restores what Adam lost. Nay without having recourse to inferences at all, proof positive of the view of the matter taken by divines, may be easily obtained from their ordinary and current phraseology. *The restoration of our primitive dignity and integrity by Jesus—our recovery by Jesus—our regaining through Jesus the divine image lost by Adam* —and many other expressions of similar import, abound in the pages of Calvin, and others distinguished in the walks of theological literature. Little, alas! have such persons been aware of the gross manner in which they have misrepresented, nay, even libelled the divine character. To speak of God as *restoring any thing* is at once to impeach his wisdom.

The only way in which even an attempt can be made to overturn the force and validity of the preceding argument, is by alleging, that although *death* does ordinarily signify the loss of life, *eternal death*, does not imply *the loss of eternal life*, but *eternal punishment.*

The man who holds the doctrine of *eternal* or *everlasting death*, and maintains that there is implied in the phrase, *everlasting punishment*, or *the everlasting loss of God's favour, and endurance of his displeasure, in a state of existence succeeding the present*, brings himself under certain obligations, and must satisfactorily answer certain queries. 1. He must prove that the phrase *eter-*

nal, or *everlasting death* occurs in scripture. 2. Supposing it to be found he must prove by the same infallible authority, that *eternal death*, is declared to be synonymous with *eternal punishment*. 3. As upon the hypothesis in question, persons who are to be *everlastingly punished* in a future state, must be *everlastingly alive* to undergo that punishment, how is it that they can be said to be *everlastingly dead* and *everlastingly alive* at one and the same time? And what authority is there in scripture for such a monstrous supposition? 4. Is eternal life spoken of in the sacred writings except in connexion with, and as the privilege of God's people? 5. If, with a view to extricate himself from the dilemma, he shall be pleased to allege, that *everlasting existence* and *everlasting life* are two distinct things, he is respectfully asked, what foundation there is scripture, common sense, or the ordinary use of language, for such a distinction? 6. If constrained by the irresistible force of truth, he shall admit that *life*, and *existence* are synonymous terms, he is asked, how it is that if God bestowed eternal life upon Adam, our progenitor could lose it—or if he did not lose it, what it is we are indebted for to the Lord Jesus, for, according to this latter alternative, we derive eternal life from Adam, not from Jesus. 7. If, *eternal death*, that is *eternal punishment* was incurred by Adam, and his natural posterity, it is asked, upon what principle, consistently with the veracity of the Supreme Being, Adam and his posterity can escape that punishment?

We apprehend Mr. T's opponents will find it no easy matter to answer these questions.

Sacred to the Memory

OF

ROBERT TAYLOR, M. D.

WHO DIED 12*th* SEPTEMBER 1827, AGED 54 YEARS.

DOCTOR TAYLOR viewed the vast concerns and plans of human aggrandizement with less interest than curiosity; and was himself the most perfect model of real and unaffected simplicity. In England he broke down the system of ESPIONAGE by which he saved the lives of many, and thus obtained an enviable distinction in the judgment of his country. To the poor he was a constant benefactor, to the world a friend, and to oppression and inhumanity of every sort, an unyielding enemy, but with all these towering qualities his home was the chief, the happy scene of mildest effection, of brightest converse.

Pause reader—for a MAN reposes here,
To truth, to science, and to freedom dear,
With soul undaunted, he surrendered life
Far from his home, his children and his wife;
With arts less wily than engage a child,
The sterner cares of life he oft beguil'd,
Whilst, fearlessly, he pierc'd the spies' retreat,
And sav'd the patriot from a traitor's fate.
The social board—laments the stern decree,
The suffering poor—a friend without a fee,
A man too proud to crouch, too great to feign,
He struggled, lived, and died without a stain:
Lov'd by his country, and abroad caress'd
By great men honor'd, and by good men bless'd,
For ease and sacred home, he nobly tried
Look'd round this beauteous scene—then smil'd
and died.

MR. THOM'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PRESBYTERY OF GLASGOW.

"The New Presbytery is but Old Priest writ large." MILTON.

"Till now I never understood the reason of the policy and prudence of the Spaniards in suffering the Inquisition among them, and certainly it will never be well with us till something like the Inquisition be introduced into England.—*Speech of the Recorder, on the trial of Penn and Mead.*

The Presbytery of Glasgow having a second time interfered with Mr. Thom, on account of his late Pamphlet; he has sent them a letter instead of conveying himself into the presence of these *Lords Inquisitors.* In this we think he has judged wisely. His time may be better spent than in dancing attendance on these platonizing heretical fathers.

Mr. Thom's letter is written in a bold, manly style, and does him great credit. The writer complains, and very justly, of the injuries which this *reverend* body of spiritual despots have inflicted on him; and asks, For what is all this? Is it for immorality, &c.? Alas! when he has seen more of mankind he will learn, that with priests and religious bodies of men, immorality is a venial crime, in comparison of professing opinions hostile to

established systems. These men think with a Lord Inquisitor of Goa, who, when a poor wretch sued for mercy, replied, " If yours had been a case of Fornication, Adultery, or even the MURDER OF A PARENT, there might be some reason for you to hope for mercy, but you are accused of HERESY " ! ! ! If Mr. Thom's crime had been an offence against good manners only, he might have slept in peace, a Scotch Inquisition would never have troubled him on that score.

We have just learnt that his letter is referred to the meeting of the general Assembly at Edinburgh, this *venerable* body as the newspapers have styled them, will doubtless consign Mr. T. to *Satan*, with which we shall feel much more satisfied than if they had the power to consign him to the custody of the keeper of the Tollbooth. With the personified Agent of Priests, Mr. T. we have no fear will be able to grapple : in the custody of more tangible beings, gaolers and hangmen, the coadjutors of priests of former times, we should tremble for his fate.

Mr. Thom has requested to be refuted by scripture if he be in error. Scripture ! Alas ! what has such men to do with any other scripture than the Solemn League and Covenant—the Assembly's Catechism, &c.? They know that Jesus and his Apostles are against them, and therefore they have a surer word of testimony to which they resort.—We meant to have said more but have not room—by our next publication we shall have further information on the subject.

SELECTED POETRY.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

THE BURDEN OF BABYLON.

SONG I.

God denounces vengeance on Babylon, and summons his armies for her overthrow.

" Where—where are the chiefs, and the hosts, whom the Lord
Hath appointed, for Babel's complete overturning ?
Rise, spare not the arrow, the spear, and the sword ;
Let the vengeance go forth, that within me is burning.

" In the clouds of the heaven, though her throne should be set,
Though brighter yon sun never burn'd than her fame;
In the dust, in my wrath, I will trample her yet—
Through ages I'll make her a byword for shame.

" Yes: my vengeance I'll slake, by a judgement as dire
As Sodom's, on her, my no less-hated foe;
So severe shall her fate be, I've sworn in mine ire,
So complete be the doom she shall soon undergo.

" Light your fires on the mountains, ye heroes! for war,
Let your standard there wave, and the trumpet be blown;
And be gather'd together, with speed, from afar;
And haste, let my wrath against Babel be shown.

" And her veteran warriors before you shall fail,
Her proudest and mightiest be speedily slain;
And the strength of her bulwarks shall nothing avail;
Since God is against her, all strongholds are vain.

" And ye, in your glory, shall vanquish the foe,
And righteous in judgement the Lord shall appear;
And Israel no longer her slavery shall know—
Her thraldom no longer my people shall fear."

Thus the mighty God of Heaven,
To his chosen men of war,
The commandment dire had given,
To come quickly from afar,
In their fiercest spirits' glow to the field;
And Babylon the Great,
To denude of all her state,
And to give her the due fate
For her seal'd.

SONG IV.

A song of lamentation over Babylon fallen.

" Howl! Babylon, howl! for the halls of thy mirth
Have been hush'd, as the house of the dead, in the earth;
Or echo the bitter bewailings of grief,
Which upon thee, unlooked for, has come like a thief.
The strings of thy harps and thy viols have been broken,
By the minstrel, as madden'd with grief he has spoken,
And sworn, since the hearts now are lifeless or sad
Past cheering, to rapture they oft have made glad,
They'll ne'er vibrate to gladden the heart of a foe,
Or to deepen, by sad recollections, thy woe.
Yes: thus they are silent, or fled has the skill
From the hand of the minstrel, now lifeless and chill.
All the music is mute, which enliven'd thy halls;
And the shoutings of mirth, late within thy proud walls,
That uprose, rending heaven, from the festival board,
Have suddenly ceased, at the frown of the Lord.
Ev'ry sound of rejoicing within thee has fled;
And the wailing of woe has arisen in its stead.
Howl! Babylon, howl! for thy power has been crush'd;
And the blood of thy dearest and noblest has gush'd.

Late, thou, in thy walls and thy armies secure,
'Gainst the universe deemedst thy dynasty sure;
As if in the heights of the heaven thou hadst dwelt,
'Mong the stars, which the influence of men never felt;
Nor dreamedst that e'er any foe should be able
To bring woe on the proud powerful scoffers of Babel:
But now, loudly howl! for thy power has been crush'd,
And the blood of thy dearest and noblest has gush'd—
They have shiver'd thy sceptre, subverted thy throne,
And thy long-vaunted empire for ever has gone.
They have burst through thy bulwarks, and, boundless their wrath,
Thy warriors they've strew'd, heaps of dead, in their path.
With the blood of the noblest, they've blench'd not to shed,
And the blood of the mightiest, their garments are red;
And thy daughters have fall'n, or for lust have been cherish'd;
And the infant and ancient, unpitied, have perish'd.
—Mortal stay thou hast none; and dost turn in despair
To thy temples! What boots it? The spoiler is there.
And thy gods are confounded—thine idols are shred:
Unmix'd is thy woe, ev'ry solace has fled.
Nor, in visions of hope, may'st thou dream of a day,
When the clouds of thy sky shall have vanish'd away;
For their shadows shall deepen, till night, which shall never
See dawn, shall absorb thee in darkness for ever.—
Then wail, for the doom thou already hast met,
For the sun of thy fame, which for ever has set;
For the wreck of thy power, once so widely obey'd;
For the waste of thy blood, now so ruthlessly made;
For the varied destruction, Jehovah has brought
Upon thee, in wrath, for the sin thou hast wrought.
And more loud may thy wail be, for time shall haste on,
And, deserted of mortal, left mouldering, lone,
'Mong thy ruins, the beasts of the desert shall prowl;
And hideous monsters shall dolefully howl;
And the ostrich shall dwell, mid thy mouldering walls;
And satyrs shall dance in thy desolate halls;
And the hiss, and the howl;
Of the dragon and owl,
Shall dismally rise, from the crumbling abodes
Of thy princes, and mouldering fanes of thy gods.
And time shall, apace,
Hasten on, and no trace
Shall remain of thy being, save only the name,
Made a proverb for sin, and for sorrow, and shame."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have been disappointed in a communication we expected, on the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts; but we hope to have a paper on this subject in our next. We congratulate our brethren among the Dissenters of all denominations, that the British Legislature had done an act of justice. We would hope that all classes of Dissenters having now obtained their wishes, will use all their endeavours to obtain emancipation for their Catholic brethren.

Philologos in our next.

We beg to inform *H.* that an answer to "Marsom's Pamphlet on Baptism," will be published by R. Wright, in the course of a short time.

F. B. Wright, Printer, Castle Street.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—JESUS.

No 43, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d* JULY 1, 1828.

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

(Continued from p. 131.)

ON THE MARTYRDOM OF KING CHARLES THE FIRST.

PRAYER.

Blessed Lord, in whose sight the death of thy saints is precious, &c.

It is impious in this prayer to compare the tyrant Charles to our blessed Master.

We acknowledge it thine especial favour, that though for our many and great provocations thou didst suffer thine anointed blessed King Charles the First, (as on this day,) to fall into the hands of violent and blood-thirsty men and barbarously to be murdered by them; yet thou didst not leave us for ever as sheep without a shepherd.

Saul and David were chosen by the prophets of the Most High God, and anointed by them with sacred oil to be the kings of Israel. But does it therefore follow, that every other king is God's anointed? Certainly not. Otherwise, what impious wretches must have been the friends and promoters of the Revolution of 1688, when James the Second was obliged to abdicate the English throne! For it undoubtedly must be admitted, that, that despot was every bit as much God's anointed, as his father Charles the First; and yet the clergy on the Fifth of November, thank God that the English were well rid of him. Here is consistency! Thank heaven, that most absurd notion,

"the divine right of kings," is the by-word of every rational man of the present day. The world has been too long imposed upon by such silly and impious nostrums, and wonders that there is still a small party that contends for "the right divine to govern wrong."

A form of prayer with thanksgiving to Almighty God, for having put an end to the great rebellion, by the restitution of the King and Royal Family.

Volumes can scarcely contain an account of all the abominable deeds of Charles the Second; and yet the clergy of the present day, thank God that he was placed on the English throne! What are we to think of a church, that can pay, in the act of prayer, such scandalous and fulsome compliments to a king who was adicted to almost every vice? Surely, if ever a church called for reformation, it is the Church of England.

We yield thee praise and thanksgiving for the wonderful deliverance of these kingdoms from the Great Rebellion.

Had it not been for the opposition of the Members of Parliament, against the measures of Charles the First, we should at this time been under the yoke of a despot. I do not mean to contend for every action of the members of the long Parliament; but it must be confessed, that we are indebted to their courage and talents for our liberties. Let no man, therefore, speak ill of those champions of our constitution. They overturned a tyrant; and their names should be held in reverence and admiration, by every friend of liberty and human happiness.

O Lord God of our salvation, who hast been exceedingly gracious unto this land, and by thy miraculous providence didst deliver us out of our miserable confusions, by restoring to us, and to his just and undoubted rights our then most gracious Sovereign Lord King Charles the Second, notwithstanding all the power and malice of his enemies; and by placing him on the throne of these kingdoms, didst restore also unto us the public and free profession of thy true religion and worship.

Charles the Second was a Catholic, and wished, during what is called the great rebellion, to have put himself under the protection of the Irish rebels. Is it not strange, (did we not meet with many strange things in the Liturgy) that Protestant Clergymen should call this king of shreds and patches a most gracious monarch, and ascribe to him the restoration of their church!

Almighty God and heavenly Father, who of thine infinite and unspeakable goodness towards us, didst in a most extraordinary and wonderful manner disappoint and overthrow the wicked designs of those traiterous, heady, and high-minded men, who under the pretence of religion, and thy most holy name, had contrived, and well nigh effected the utter destruction of this church and kingdom.

As to the destruction of the Church of England, I have nothing to say; but the charge that the kingdom was nearly destroyed during the suspension of the monarchy, is certainly false. As it is well known that the English were never more respected or feared by foreigners, than during the time of the Commonwealth. "England," says Mr. Fox, "was great and glorious while her religion was popery. She then reared her head above the nations, outstripped them all in the career of improvement, and soared above them towards the heaven of liberty. The great charter of her freedom was then wrested from unwilling power: commerce and manufactures were raising her citizens, burgesses, and merchants, to wealth and intelligence, and placing them side by side with her barons: while, from contending elements, arose the harmony of representative government. She was great while that change, called reformation, was proceeding, or retarded, or subsiding into fixedness, through successive reigns. She then began to wave her flag of sovereignty over the sea; her laws were formed in wisdom; and her literature splendid in genius, profound in learning, and mighty in originality, advanced with giant step. She was great at that tremendous period when the crown was trampled in the dust, a regal head fell on the scaffold, and Cromwell sat on an ungarnished throne. Episcopacy was not her religion then. The Church of England

fled to the wilderness: the mitre was crushed under the sectarian feet, and the crosier snapped asunder by unconsecrated hands: yet then she was great; not a nation but cringed for her friendship, and trembled at her frown. Was there persecution, oppression or insult, on the Continent,—she lifted her voice of thunder and Europe's hills were moved; her mountains quaked and trembled to their foundations. And while Episcopacy has been Church-of-Englandism, our country has been great and glorious still; yes, through vicissitude, great; in adversity and disappointment, in privation and suffering, in all changes and chances, in arms and arts, in literature and benevolence. The monuments of her majesty reflect the glittering of every star of heaven; and not a wind can blow that has not wafted from her shores some freight of charity. And she would be great, were this assuming sect lost in oblivion, with all its robes, and forms, and wealth, and creeds: still to her would the nations look, as to an elder sister of the earth, pre-eminent in wisdom, grace and majesty." *

GEORGE R.

Our will and pleasure is, that these four forms of prayer and service, made for the Fifth of November, the thirtieth of January, the Twenty-ninth of May, and the Twenty-fifth of October, be forthwith printed and published, and annexed to the Book of Common Prayer and Liturgy of the Church of England, to be used yearly on the said days, in all Cathedral and Collegiate Churches and Chapels, &c.

By his Majesty's Command.

Who gave authority to kings to domineer over the Preachers of the Gospel, and to order Prayers, either of this or that description, to be used in their Churches?

It is a strange a assertion contained in the Twentieth Article of the Established Church, that "the church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith,"

* Fox's Lectures. p. p. 49, 50.

when it is expressly declared in the Act 26, Henry iii. Chap. i. that the King or Queen "is vested" (says the Act) "with all power to exercise all manner of ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical persons, have no manner of jurisdiction ecclesiastical but by and under the King's majesty, who hath full power and authority to hear and determine all manner of causes ecclesiastical, and to reform and correct all vice, sin, errors and heresies whatsoever." "This power," says a sensible writer, "Henry viii. transferred from the pope to himself, (when he quarrelled with him about the Queen's divorce) and the Kings and Queens of England have enjoyed it ever since." It is evident then, that the King of England is the Churchman's pope, and that he can change the religion of the land, and establish Mahometanism or any other superstition in its place. Should the pious christian ask what becomes of christianity, if this power, is vested in a fallible monarch? I reply, that the friends of Episcopacy very seldom give themselves the trouble to make this inquiry, and think the dissenters very impertinent for putting such a question. Yet it behoves all who value christianity to meet it fairly and honestly, and act agreeably to the answer which conscience shall dictate. PURGATOR.

ORTHODOX IMPARTIALITY.

"Audi alteram partem."

The following has been handed to us by a correspondent. It was addressed to the Editor of the paper mentioned below, who had made pretty free with the motives and characters of Unitarians, and when requested to correct his statement, supposed, by our correspondent, very charitably, to have been made in error, it was refused insertion. The father of modern orthodoxy after he had burnt the Body and the Books of *Servetus*, bestowed upon him the epithets of blasphemous dog, &c. &c. The Editor of the Journal alluded to, may revile a people who are by no means inferior to him or his party, and among some he may ob-

tain credence; we should hope there are but few of those who monopolize the name of orthodox who can be, at this time of day, so grossly ignorant, as not to know that Unitarians are neither Deists, nor Atheists, nor even Socinians. If they be *really* ignorant, then we think they have ill used the means of information, which are in the hands of every one. If it be so, then from our hearts we do pity them and willingly forgive them.

(EDITOR.)

To the Editor of Baldwin's London Weekly Journal.

SIR,

The Editor of a Newspaper, is a public character; and, as such, is amenable to the public, for any groundless charges, or false statements which he may make. It is under this impression, that I appeal to your sense of justice, to be permitted to refute in your paper, certain assertions which have appeared in it, to the disparagement of a respectable religious denomination, to which I have the happiness to belong.

The assertions to which I allude, are contained in your two last numbers, for April 19th, and May 3rd; and are as follow: . . "The Deists and Socinians, deny their God." "We are not quite sure whether any form of declaration could be devised more effectual than the Duke of Wellington's declaration to exclude *an honest* Socinian or Atheist." "The truth is, that the Socinian, or "*other*" * infidel who would make the declaration in question, would not scruple to swear to the Athanasian Creed."

Sir, I am sorry to say, that, in the above assertions, you "bear false witness against your neighbour;" and that you appear to be actuated by a considerable degree of enmity towards them. By *Socinians*, you evidently mean those who call themselves *Unitarians*; and it is obviously your aim, to identify them with *Deist, and Infidels, and Atheists*. Sir, Unitarians are *not* Socinians. Socinus contended, that Jesus Christ was an object of religious worship; while Unitarians maintain, that, being a creature of God, it is idolatry to worship him. Can two opini-

* The word "other" is not in italics and between inverted commas in the paper.

ons be more opposite than these?—Moreover, Unitarians refuse to be called after any man. They will not adopt the appellation of any religious teacher, save that of Jesus Christ. Him only do they acknowledge as their master in religion, and to his authority only will they bow.—The fact is, there are no Socinians in England; and there can be no propriety in using the term, when the system is extinct. But it serves as a term of reproach; and this is sufficient to satisfy those, who have adopted christianity without its heavenly charities. †

And then, sir, as to your classing Unitarians with Deists, and Infidels, and Atheists:—they believe that there is "one God the Father," and that "God is love;" they believe the scriptures to contain the revealed will of God, and that they are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works;" they receive them as the rule of their faith and practice, and do not admit of any other record as the guidance of christians; they believe in the divine mission of Jesus Christ—that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotton Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" they "confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in their heart that God hath raised him from the dead;" they have "hope toward God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust:" and they live under the conviction, that "God will judge the world in righteousness," and "render unto all according to their deeds." And such is their value of christianity, that they probably have written more in its defence, than any other denomination of Christian professors. Do Deists, and Infidels, and Atheists, sir, believe and act in this manner? If they do not, then what must we think of that Editor, who can identify Unitarians with these different classes of persons? Has he the requisite knowledge to write on such a subject? or is he obeying the impulse of malignant passions, and endeavouring to brand with odium a certain portion of mankind? And for what? Be-

† See Aspland's *Plea for for Unitarian Dissenters, p. p.* 68—73.

cause they do not happen to view christianity in the same light as himself! Oh, that men could agree to differ! and that they could differ with perfect good-will.

I do not say that in the above, I have given the *whole* of the Unitarian faith. By no means. But I have stated sufficient, to shew the groundlessness, not to say the maliciousness, of your assertions. And I trust, in future, you will be more cautious in expressing yourself; and that you will endeavour to learn, that "though you have all faith, so that you could remove mountains, and have not charity, you are nothing."

A UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN.

P. S. I have no hope, sir, that you will be so just as to insert this letter in your paper. But should I not see it in your next number, or a notice that you intend inserting it in a subsequent one, I shall endeavour to procure its insertion in some other Journal; where there is no bigotry to blight the generous feelings of the heart, and no intolerance to violate the rights of conscience and usurp the throne of God.

ESSAY ON INSPIRATION.

(*Concluded from page 203*)

'*Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given unto us by God:*

'*Which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in* words *taught by the Holy Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*' *

That the Apostles in this passage modestly speaks of himself in the plural number, is evident from the beginning of the chapter. He is arguing in vindication of the simple unaffected lan-

* 1 Cor. ii, 12, 13. It is not easy to ascertain the meaning of the last clause—comparing spiritual things with spiritual—in this connection. Perhaps 1 Cor. xiv, 29, considered with 1 John iv, 1, may contribute to explain it.

guage, in which he delivered the doctrines of the Gospel, purposely avoiding the rhetorical and studied embellishmets of human eloquence. As if he had said: 'I have in no respect adjusted my manner of preaching to the artificial and ostentatious practices of the orators of this world. I have a more important purpose in view than the propogation of my own fame, as a man of eloquence; even the demonstration and the establishment of the Truth of God. My acquaintance with the great articles of the Christian faith, I received by immediate revelation from Jesus Christ himself. These I communicate to you; not in words of human wisdom, but in the plain form suggested to me by the Holy Spirit.'

To these we might add other texts of a similar import: but we should not be authorised to extend any conclusions deduced from them beyond himself and his Epistles: and the large concessions which we are going to make, upon solid grounds, in favour of this Chief Apostle, renders a minute examination of any texts that relates to him, entirely superfluous.

Paul received his designation to the apostolate through the medium of a most miraculous interposition, and for the execution of a commission the most important, since the ministration of Jesus Christ, that had been, or could be, entrusted to the care of man. In the midst of a furious and an unrelenting career of persecution, whilst he was breathing murder and devastation against the infant-church, and had armed his impetuous zeal with an authoritative mandate from the high-priest to crush it, if possible, at its birth; he was instantaneously arrested by a beam of heavenly light, which shone around him with an effulgence vivid as the lightning. He fell to the ground, sightless and dismayed, and found himself addressed by a voice from Heaven, expostulating with him upon the motives of his implacable animosity against the disciples of the Lord. Full of trepidation and perplexity, and abashed by the plain, but unanswerable, question of the much injured Jesus, he rose up to obey the dictates of the heavenly vision; and became henceforward a renowned champion of that faith which he had once laid waste; and at length, after a most prosperous and painful warfare, wit-

nessed the sincerity of his conversion, and washed away the stains of former guilt with the stream of his own blood.

We clearly perceive that, in this instance, the Almighty Director of the Universe overstept the stated limits of his administration, and in the conversion of this 'chosen vessel,' exerted (if we may be pardoned the expression) an extraordinary effort of Omnipotence. We might previously have inferred from this striking transaction, that God had in view the accomplishment of some purpose of more than ordinary use and dignity; and the fact corresponds to such a reasonable inference. This eminent person, of an enthusiastic temper, an enterprising spirit, and of a persevering and unshaken fortitude, was invested with a commission that scandalised every Jew, and confounded the ideas even of the Apostles themselves. He was authorised, not only to proselyte the idolatrous Gentiles to the Christian faith, but to admit them, without circumcision or obedience to the Mosaic ritual, to all the privileges and to the perfect liberty of the Gospel, upon equal terms with the Jews: who fondly imagined the common parent and preserver of man to be their appropriated God and Father.

What activity and firmness of mind were requisite for this arduous undertaking! what dangers would he encounter, what odium would he incur, what persecution would he suffer, from the virulent zeal of his countrymen, in the avowal of a doctrine so incompatible with their prejudices, and subversive of ceremonial institutions, to which they chiefly owed their discrimination as the people of God, and ascribed the very essence of piety and religion! Must we not suppose that he was furnished with the most extraordinary gifts for the discharge of such an arduous and weighty office? Could any thing less than the perpetual invigoration of spiritual strength sustain the infirmity of man, in the multiplicity of pressing emergencies to which the Apostle of the Gentiles was exposed! emergencies, sufficient to overwhelm the spirit and exhaust the patience of human nature.

We will briefly examine this matter, and see what qualifications he arrogates to himself: only premising, that his disinterested conduct on all occasions, the magnanimity with which he

endured not only afflictions, but the severer trial of reproach and scorn, rather than let go his integrity ; his humiliating acknowledgment of his ferocious and sanguinary zeal for Judaism, and the ingenuous freedom with which he asserts his sincerity as a Christian, and his services as an Apostle,(a sure pledge of conscious merit!) are undoubted presumptions in his favour, and discountenance all suspicions of stratagem and imposture.

He speaks of his knowledge of the Truths of Christianity, not as derived from the slow process of gradual instruction or diligent enquiry ; not as collected from the information of the Apostles or any other men, but as originating immediately from the fountain-head, JESUS CHRIST himself. He had no communication, and probably not even a personal acquaintance, with the other Apostles, until he had been engaged several years in the duties of his ministry: and at last he had an interview with the principal of them, merely to preclude their opposition to his preaching, and by those means prevent the obstruction of the Gospel—to inform them of his appointment to the Apostleship, not to instruct himself in the doctrines of the Christian Revelation. From this circumstantial detail of his first proceedings after his call, given by himself, he, doubtless, means us to understand, that his authority and injunctions are equivalent to those of his Lord and Master, who had appointed and instructed him.

But it is by no means necessary, or even reasonable, to suppose, that this energy of the Spirit operated with equal and unceasing influence, and took up, as it were, a constant residence in his mind. JESUS CHRIST seems to be the only man on whom the ALMIGHTY poured down his Spirit 'without measure.' And our Apostle appears to have been favoured with various occasional revelations, adapted to the various exigencies of his ministry; and these inferences were superfluous, if the operation of the Spirit was uniform and perpetual. And he sometimes enforces his injunctions with expressly asserting, that he received such information from the LORD JESUS: and never mentions, as I recollect, that the indwelling Spirit suggests it to his mind at that particular time, which he would naturally have done,

had this actually been the case. Besides, he submits some propositions to the judgement of those to whom he writes, to be adopted, or disregarded, at their discretion; and does not perremptorily enjoin them, as unquestionably true and of indispensable obligation.

It is plain also, that in some points, less essential, it is likely, to the business of his mission, GOD did not think it proper to satisfy him, and to solve his doubts; but left him in uncertainty, to the solitary use of his own judgment. Accordingly we find from his history in the Acts, and even from his own Epistles, that he was not exempted from the frailties and imperfections of mortality. But (for which he can never be enough commended) whenever he advances his private unauthorised opinion, he speaks in terms of modesty and even diffidence; so that it is easy for us to collect from his manner of expression whether he is dictating his own sentiments, or a revealed truth. Nor indeed was he likely, for several reasons, to impose any injunction as obligatory, from his own unsupported persuasion of its propriety. He gloried in his Gospel, as the direct gift of Heaven: he appears to hold intellectual excellence in but little estimation, when contrasted with moral worth; and depreciates his own endowments, in particular, with unusual earnestness, and with symptoms of deep humility.

He was a person of very liberal and elevated soul; a jealous assertor of the rights and dignity of man; and may not improperly be styled the *Great Patriot of the Gospel.* This excellency of spirit, most observable in his life and writings, would naturally render him averse to the imposition of any restraint, or the proposal of any article of faith, when he had not the most satisfactory assurance both of its truth and fitness.

The result of these several considerations, in my judgment, is that when St. Paul speaks and directs in his own apostolic character, his word is of the highest possible authority, and is impressed with more marks of credibility, and a divine origin, than any other writings of the New Testament: and that his Epistles, as far as they have been transmitted to us entire and uncorrupted, contain truth, evangelical truth, without any mixture of error.

But facts are of more importance in authenticating the Christian Revelation, than arguments and opinions, though advanced by Apostles themselves; and the contracted plan of epistolary writings, and their unavoidable defects, arising from our ignorance of the complicated circumstances under which they might be composed, and from many other particulars, render the Gospel histories, which exhibit the life of Jesus, as they are a more exact and copious delineation of christianity, a more secure and eligible rule of conduct.

To make one general inference deducible from the positions of the preceeding Essay, which is earnestly submitted to the consideration of those whom it more immediately respects.

If Evangelists and Apostles, in the primitime days of Christianity, were not inspired by the Spirit of GOD in the manner that has been generally imagined, no man, or set of men, will be supposed, by reasonable people, to be favoured with this eminent privilege in these later times. Therefore, those societies of Christians who think themselves to be actuated by the Holy Spirit on various occasions, and particularly during the celebration of the public services of devotion, though their sincerity and conscientiousness are unquestionable, must of course, in this respect, labour under the influence of fancy and self-delusion.

I have not been induced to make the preceding remark from any motive of malignity and uncharitableness, or from a disparaging opinion of those to whom it may be applicable; but, because a particular set of Protestants, who have arisen amongst us, and have been unhappily discriminated by a name of derision and contempt, which I, who cannot either ridicule or despise the sincere and virtuous, dislike to mention, has placed so great confidence in the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit, and their internal feelings, as to neglect too much the letter of the Sacred Writings, and the assistances of ancient literature. They have regarded the one as of secondary use in the business of religious faith; and appear to have no conception how the glimmer of the other can reflect any light on the splendid page of revelation. From this consideration I will be bold to say, that no denomination of Christians whatsoever can boast

such a large proportion of sensible, temperate and virtuous members, who hold so many unwarrantable and absurd opinions; and who are, at the same time, so slenderly acquainted with the learning of antiquity, and with the genius and doctrines of that revelation, which they suppose themselves to profess in its greatest purity.

Thus without reserve, and, I am sure, without partiality, have I declared my thoughts very plainly and concisely upon this interesting subject; and shall be happy, if those who may deign to read this *Essay* will use the same freedom with which I have both thought and written. I wish, with the most ardent aspirations, to see the foundations of Christianity entirely disincumbered of that mass of rubbish, which ignorance, artifice, and superstition, have heaped upon them, and restored to their pristine state of Apostolical simplicity: nor shall my exertions in this great cause ever cease, but with the suspension of my faculties or the interruption of my existence. An unreserved exhibition of the truth can never be injurious to the interests of religion, unless indeed debased by acrimonious zeal and malevolence of spirit, or made at some very unseasonable juncture; allegations that cannot be advanced, I hope, with any plausibility against this Essay, and in these times of liberality and moderation. Perhaps, however, we are too liberal in our concessions, when we allow that there *may be* a time improper for divulging truth through the medium of the press. No Christian thinks the enforcement of religious duties and the reprobation of vicious manners ever improper. This salutary work is urged *in season and out of season*. And why should we be more indulgent to intellectual perversity than to moral depravation—to the understanding than to the heart?

Except we demolish some of those feeble outworks, which the blind and timid credulity of darker ages assisted to erect for the entrenchment of superstition, and ecclesiastical supremacy, we shall be incapable of defending even the citidal with any tolerable prospect of success. The unreflecting, who cannot discern, and the malicious, who will not distinguish, must of course confound the devices of ignorance and policy, whilst they are avowed and defended, with the genuine doctrines of the Gospel.

The notion of a plenary inspiration, opposed in the preceding pages, is one of those many fancies that have impaired the strength and tarnished the beauty of our religion; and has been a great obstacle to a just interpretation of the scriptures, by conducing to extinguish the light of reason, that candle of the Lord, 'which illuminateth every man who cometh into the world.'—Some well-intentioned, but mistaken, Christians, from a servile timidity and a precipitate zeal, which, under the appearance of doing honour to our religion, in reality disgrace it, invert the order of things, and frustrate the gifts of providence. From a persuasion of the absolute inspiration of every line and word of the Sacred Writings, they relinquish the privilege of intelligent creatures, and bend their faculties to a coincidence with the literal positions of Scripture, however unintelligible, however subversive of the rules of temperate criticism and rational interpretation, and however inconsistent with the context of the passage, and with the scope and tenour of Revelation. There are duties to practise, there are propositions to believe, previous and preparatory to our acquaintance with Christianity, and independent on it. * But the reason of these people is not thought worthy of performing even the subordinate office of a

* The learned Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the eleveth century, was of a very different way of thinking; and as his mode of investigation is curious in itself, and seems to have been too generally adopted by all ranks of Christians from that age to the present, it may not be amiss to produce it, for the satisfaction and edification of the reader.

"Sicut rectus ordo exigit," says this logical Prelate, "ut profunda fidei Christianæ credamus, priusquam ea præsumamus ratione discutere; ità negligentia mihi videtur, si, postquam confirmati sumus in fide, non studemus, quod credimus, intelligere." Mosh. *Ecc. Hist.* Cent. XI.

Several polemic theologians of this our day might be pointed out, who appear to have reasoned like the good Archbishop: but if might be permitted to interpose my opinion, I would fix upon two publications lately voided, as entitled to an unquestionable pre-eminence in this respect, and written exactly after the heart of our prelatical divine; the Rev. Mr. Jones's *Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity*, and Dr. Burgh's *Scriptural Confutation:* miserable specimens, indeed, of the Theology of the eighteenth Century, and the most contemptible of all possible performances!

Quo Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, Mævi!

slave. She is reluctantly borne away in triumph, without a temporary permission to advertise the conqueror of his frailty and fallibility. Unless faith, however, derive all its energy from a subserviency to our reasoning intellect, patiently exercised and impartially exerted, our enquiries will be unfortunate, and not innocent: they will neither issue in the adoption of venial error, nor the perception of unmixed truth.

*** *The above Essay which is now finished was written by the late learned and excellent Gilbert Wakefield. A few copies have been taken off as the pages passed through the Reflector, and are published separately in a Pamphlet.*

DR. BURGH.

THE following examples are offered to the reader as an exact specimen of the curious manner, in which Dr. Burgh and such writers constantly reason in defence of the Trinity.

They believed not in God; and put not their trust in his Help. Psalm lxxviii. 23.

What is predicated of God in the former clause is predicated of Help in the latter: therefore Help is God.

Make a chearful noise to the God of Jacob. Psalm lxxxi. 1.

Whatsoever things are of good report.—think on these things. Phil. iv. 8

The psalmist exhorts us to make a chearful noise, and Pual recommends, as a Christian virtue, whatever is of good report; therefore a chearful noise is a christian virtue. Q. E. D.

For nonsense like this, delivered in a strain of the most indecent buffoonery, and accompanied by every symptom of the most profound ignorance of these subjects, was our theologian complimented with the dignity of LL. D., as a reward of his high deserts as a controversialist and a divine, by one of the most renowned Universities in Christendom!

Wakefield's Enquiry.

CURIOUS RELIC.

In a former Number, we presented our Readers with the figure of a cross and a fac simile of the legend in very ancient characters. We cannot take upon ourselves to say that this cross has ever hung at the breast of the mother of Constantine, but we should feel obliged, if any of our Readers conversant with high antiquity would afford us information on the subject.

PRICE OF THE TOLLGATE ON THE OTHER SIDE PURGATORY.

"Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life."

It has been wisely ordained by those who built the city of Purgatory, that there should be no toll-bars erected on any of the roads leading to it, but that all travelers might enter it free of expense. As the accommodations of the place are not of the most comfortable kind, and they have to pay very dearly for the same, they, therefore, who arrive there, wish to make their stay as short as possible, and it is exceedingly difficult to leave the place on account of the enormous expense attending the petitioning the governor for permission to leave, and the large sums demanded at the toll-bars on the other side, which are said to be many. The following case will illustrate this.

A Case was lately argued in the exchequer court, Dublin, in which the residuary legatee contested the bequest of £4000, left by an old lady to priests, to say masses for her, in order to rescue her poor miserable soul from the torments of purgatory.

Mr. Cooper, counsel for the legatee, contended that this was an enormous sum to have appropriated to such a purpose. The poor old woman must have been priest-ridden when she made such a bequest. In such a case, it was competent to the court to apportion some reasonable sum, but 4000*l* was beyond all reason.

The Chief Baron said: How much do you think would bring her out of purgatory, Mr. Cooper?

Mr. Cooper: I think 10*l* would be amply sufficient, to relieve an old woman, my Lord!!

Mr. O Loughlin. I am sure the balance would not be enough to take Mr. Cooper out of purgatory, if he were there.

The Court. We will refer it to the Master, to determine how much he may think necessary for her relief in purgatory, and on the report, we will be able to determine what ought to be done.

Mr. Loughlin. Yes, my Lord, but recollect that this poor woman's soul is, in the mean time, suffering all the torments of purgatory. I am sure your Lordship will not willingly inflict pain by delay, nor diminish the sum of 4000*l.* This Lady must have been the best judge of her own sins, and she thought *Four Thousand Pounds* necessary to rescue her from purgatory.

The Court decided that the matter should go before the Master first.

INTELLIGENCE.

Lancashire and Cheshire Provincial Meeting.

On Thursday, June 19, the annual meeting of the Unitarian Association of Lancashire and Cheshire, was held in the Unitarian chapel, Paradise street, Liverpool. The devotional part of the service was performed by the Rev. J. J. Tayler, of Manchester and an excellent Sermon delivered, by the Rev. Mr. Whitehead, on the Simplicity of the Christian Faith, Doctrine, and Practice, from 2 Cor. xi, 3. We wish this Sermon may be published, as we think it calculated for much usefulness.

Anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, &c.

The annual meeting of this association took place on Wednesday the 21st of May. when an excellent sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Hutton of Leeds. After the service the company retired to the London Tavern, Bishopgate-street, to an excellent dinner. W. Smith, Esq., M. P. in the chair.

The Rev. Dr. Hutton, in returning thanks on his health being given, observed, that the success of their cause might be anticipated with greater certainty from the circumstance, that the sentiments which it professed might be held in combination with every form of church government. Episcopalians, Presbytarians, Independents, Baptists and Methodists, as they were all christians, so they might all be Unitarians. Unitarians contended for a general principle, for an eternal truth, and not for any form of church government. Their object was to restore to the great universal Father, that supreme homage, that exclusive worship, which all sects, whatever were their

forms of church government, ought to render to him; and which was prescribed by Him who said, "In that day, whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name that shall he give you." Perhaps this might excite a melancholy feeling in them who heard him, and they might be induced to anticipate the arrival of a period when Unitarianism would immerge into christianity; a melancholy feeling he was persuaded it would not be, for this was exactly the nature of Unitarianism; this was exactly the death of it which he would anticipate; it was the death of the stream in the ocean; the death of twilight in the day; the death of finite in infinite; of temporal in eternal.

The apparent progress, observed the speaker, of the great truth that God is ONE had been by no means inconsiderable; but the latent progress had been much greater. In the bosom of all the sects, which he had just now enumerated, Nicodemuses were to be found, who under the shades of night would profess those doctrines, which he, (Dr. H.) deemed to be the truth as it is in Jesus. Under happier circumstances than Unitarians were at present placed, it might be hoped that these members would make their appearance; when there was no lion lurking in the streets, they would probably make themselves known. The friends of liberty had cause to rejoice that the old lion persecution, who had frightened so many persons, had waxed feeble, (cheers;) his sight was dim, his muscular strength was much abated, and though he now and then opened his mouth to terrify them, they were comforted by the conviction that his teeth were no longer there. (Cheers and laughter.) We have often heard of the "march of intellect," and it was cause of rejoicing that it had been the march of civil and religious liberty, and those who had thrown the chains off their own mind, could no longer endure the idea of imposing them upon the minds of others. (Applause.) Government were beginning to perceive that it was with actions only, and not with opinions and principles, which they had to do.

Mr. Christee, after some justly merited encomiums on the Chairman, proposed the health of that Gentleman, which was received with loud cheers.

The Chairman returned thanks in an able energetic, and impressive speech. He rejoiced with the company on the occasion of their being then assembled; spoke of the obloquy to which Unitarians had been exposed almost down to the present day. Forty years ago it was not safe for a man to profess himself a Unitarian; some of the spirit that then existed still existed among some of the sects denominated christian. Such persons were grossly ignorant of the sentiments of Unitarians, and therefore they denied them the name they most valued. It would appear desirable that the opprobrious epithets with which the populace had been misled should be got rid of.

There was a phrase which the honorable gentleman wished to have disused, viz. "The wisdom of our ancestors." Blackstone used the happy expression "the collective wisdom of past ages." This distinction conveyed a meaning directly the reverse of the expression he had before noticed. The first implied that our ancestors were wiser than we, the second that we were wiser than our ancestors, because we had the advantage of their wisdom and experience, and were still availing ourselves of them. This distinction was not only important in itself, but one that it was desirable to keep constantly in view; because there was no act of superstition, cruelty, bigotry, or intolerance, which might not be justified by this phrase "the wisdom of our ances-

tors." "The wisdom of our ancestors" led them on account of the most trivial differences of opinion, to commit hundreds of their fellow men to the flames, amidst the shouts and exultations of wicked and besotted multitudes.

In the time of Henry VIII. an attempt at treason was a crime for which a man was considered only worthy to be hung, while those who did not believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation were to be burned alive. The man who attempted the murder of a king, or the overthrow of the kingdom, was to be exposed to suffering only for a few moments, but he who should form what his spiritual rulers imagined an erroneous opinion, was subjected to the most lingering and painful death; and, in addition, was exposed to the taunts, the insults, and the revilings of a fanatical and infuriated mob. "The wisdom of our ancestors" had enacted, that a man should not ride through the king's forest without being subjected to the loss of some of his members. The penalties for witchcraft might be referred to as another mark of this perfection of wisdom. The law which obliged an old woman charged with the crime to pass through fire and water, in order to prove her innocence, had only been repealed in the reign of George II. We ourselves had experienced some of the benefits of this wisdom of our ancestors; for it was not till the last century that Dissenters were allowed toleration. The act of toleration was passed in 1688; but for a long time the Unitarians had been unable to profess what they believed to be consistent with Scripture, without subjecting themselves to reproach and persecution. Even as late as the period just alluded to, a man had been burnt at Edinburgh for professing Unitarianism. In 1772 a provision was made for school-masters, or else till that time a man could not teach a few children to read and write, without subscribing to the articles of the Established Church. Now, in what condition Dissenters could have been then, he was happy to say the gentlemen present could only guess. Up to the time to which he had referred, Unitarians were liable to all the penalties against blasphemy, and even recently a person high in authority had ventured to insinuate that the liability still continued.

The Chairman in referring to the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, said it was a day which, through his political life, he had rather wished than hoped to see arrive. He had always wished it, and not a year had passed without his having exerted his utmost influence to effect the object in view. Now he had lived to see it obtained, though not to its full extent. There was a something which he could still wish to see accomplished, viz. a total separation between politics and religion. He wished to see the time when every man might claim the right of thinking for himself in matters of religion, and of expressing his sentiments without fear of persecution. Charity and liberality were virtues of slow growth. When Calvin, and even Luther too, entered England, liberality did not enter with them. Servetus was as much martyred by Calvin, as many others were by the hands of Bonner. We ought to be thankful for what had been granted us, and exercise kindness and charity towards those who differed from us in opinion.

The meeting was also addressed by MR. GIBSON, treasurer of the association, who remarked on the authority exercised by most classes of Dissenters, which he said among some of them was equal to that exercised by Episcopalians. Mr. G. exhorted the youths around him, never to submit to any thing in the form of authority that had not

argument on its side. If religion was worth any thing, its value arose from its being founded in the understanding, if it was founded there it would control the conduct and regulate the heart.

Mr. Favell, a member of the Corporation of London, rose midst the cheers of the company, and addressed the audience at considerable length. He said that although he had not the honor of belonging to the Unitarian Denomination, yet he felt great pleasure in meeting the present assembly, for he always held them in esteem on account of their advocacy of the great principles of civil and religious liberty. He was proud to say that in his early life he had co-operated with many distinguished and brave men of renown of the Unitarian denomination. That the last night that Dr. Priestley spent in London, previous to his voyage to America was in his house. Whatever difference of opinion there was on different points, there was one common brotherhood,—they were brethren under persecution. Drs. Towers, Price, and Rees, were his warm and constant associates. With some of them he celebrated in that room the centenary of the glorious revolution of 1668; for whatever differences of opinion might exist among them they all denied the right of human authority over the conscience.

The Chairman gave:—

"The health of Mr Sturch, and may no intolerant distinction remain between Roman Catholics and Protestants to disturb the peace, to tarnish the fame, and to impair the greatness of the United Empire."

Mr. S. in a concise speech returned thanks. He was a Unitarian, because he believed Unitarianism to be the truth, and because it was favorable to civil and religious liberty, or rather to general liberty, which included both. He then referred to his connection with Ireland, and the efforts he had made to promote the liberty of the Catholics, not because he was friendly to that religion, for he believed it to be a corrupt one; but because he deemed it to be the right of every man to think for himself.

We are under the necessity of postponing the speeches of Dr. Rees; of Mr. Porter (of Ireland;) and of Mr. Aspland; as we are unwilling to abridge any more than absolutely necessary. We hope to give them in our next.

Unitarian Meeting at Risley.

On Whit Sunday, May 27th, a Meeting was held at Risley, by the Unitarian Congregation of that place, attended by Friends from Chowbent, Warrington and the neighbourhood. There was service in the Afternoon, at half-past, two o'clock. The chapel was tolerably well filled, and the congregation was serious and attentive. The devotional part of the service was performed by the Rev. F. Knowles, of Park Lane; and the Rev. B. R. Davies, of Chowbent, preached an excellent sermon, from Acts xxviii. 15. "And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and the three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." The preacher drew a striking picture of the situation of Paul, at the time alluded to in the words. He dwelt with peculiar earnestness on the necessity of *united* effort, on the part of christian professors, to the promotion of the truth. And his appeal must have been felt by all, that if an inspired apostle, and especially one like the apostle of the Gentiles, needed encouraging in the discharge of his duty, how much more so must it be the case with respect to the friends of truth in the present day!

At the conclusion of the service, the congregation, male and female, and friends who attended on the occasion, retired to a private house, (at present uninhabited) near the chapel, and there took tea; which was a very pleasant social repast. The Rev. Joseph Marriott, the pastor of the congregation presided on the occasion. In the course of the Evening, various appropriate sentiments were given, occasionally interspersed with singing a hymn; and the assembly was addressed by Messrs. Davis, Dimock, Knowles, and Marriott. About eight o'clock, the Meeting broke up; and each retired to his own house, well persuaded, that as it is happiest for "brethren to dwell together in harmony," so it is most favourable to christian improvement, and the spread of christian truth. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John xvii. 20, 21.)

Anniversary of the Methodist Unitarians.

On Thursday, May 29th was held at Rawtenstall, the Annual Association of the Methodist Unitarians, as they are often called. * In consequence of the illness of Mr. Allard, of Bury, Mr. Stewart of Todmorden, preached in the Morning, an eloquent and interesting discourse, from Heb. vi. 11th and 12th verses, in which he evinced much zeal, and held forth much encouragement, in the hope that Unitarianism must ultimately triumph over all opposition. This must be the more cheering and gratifying, as it came from a native of Scotland, and one trained up in the doctrines peculiar to that highly orthodox country. After the Morning services the Friends retired to the Wheat Sheaf Inn, when upwards of one hundred, male and female, partook of an excellent dinner, the price was eighteen pence, including every expence, which enabled many of the poorer individuals to join in the repast and enjoy it, as such seldom falls to their lot in this neighbourhood.

After dinner the business of the meeting was transacted in the chapel. Mr. James Wilkinson in the chair. Reports were then given of the Societies connected with the Association, viz. Newchurch, Rawtenstall, Rochdale, Padiham, and Todmorden. Mr. Ashworth spoke at some length favorably of the congregation at Newchurch, its regularity &c., and congratulated the meeting, for the first time of assembling at Rawtenstall, on the present occasion, when he had the satisfaction to hear from Mr. Ingham, (the old minister there) that to him (Mr. Ashworth,) they owed their present views, as his (Mr. A's) separation from the Methodists at Newchurch, and the publication of his opinions, had led him (Mr Ingham) to a further examination of the scriptures, from which he had derived so much consolation, that he could now repose in his God as a God of mercy and a God of love.

Mr. Taylor of Rochdale, after reporting of the state of the Society there, which he regretted was not altogether so regular as that at Newchurch, dwelt much on the institution of the Lord's Supper as an imperative duty which ought to be attended too, particularly as it would shew who were the real friends of our faith. But that which elicited the liveliest interest, was the flourishing state of the Unitarian cause at Padiham, as given by Mr. Robinson of that place. He represented the congregation as regular and encouraging under the labors and preaching of three home-made preachers, himself, Mr. James Pollard, and Mr. Stephenson; he said, if a strange preacher came to them, (and he wished to God they had more) they had then overcrowded congregations. He felt much also for the people behind the mountains, as he termed them, meaning a place north of Padiham, called Downham, where

* I suppose the name of Methodist Unitarians arose from being formerly in the connection of the Methodists and still retaining some of their forms and plans.

Unitarianism has been preached and embraced by a few, who are desirous it should spread and be occasionally preached amongst them; laborers are wanted in the vineyard. The Sunday School at Padiham was very promising, married men who were members of the society were condescending to become scholars, learning to read and write, and the number of children wanting instruction were double to the pecuniary means they had within themselves. Mr. Robinson could never forget the kind Mrs. Hughes of Bristol, and he wished the thanks of this meeting might be given to her for having aided in the support of them and most of the Societies connected with the Association. This met the approbation of all, and well it might, for having received so unsparingly from her munificent hand, and in the Poet's words,—

"Fresh as the leaf her name shall live,
Her works were heavenly fruit."

After the nomination of the preachers, the Rev. W. Tate of Chorley, and the Rev. B. R. Davis of Chowbent, for the next Association, which will be held at Newchurch, on Thursday in Whitsun-week, the meeting broke up for tea, and met again in the chapel in the Evening, when Mr. Ragland of Hindley, delivered an excellent sermon from Matt. x. 9, 10. It appeared this discourse had been occasioned by the letter of invitation sent from Mr. Ashworth to Mr. Ragland, wherein he stated it was not customary to pay the preachers on this occasion.—Mr. Ragland not liking it the worse for it, as he said "it wore the marks of honesty on the face of it." * Mr. Ragland preached the following sunday three times, twice at Newchurch and once at Rawtenstall to crowded congregations, who were highly pleased with him, expressing a desire to hear him the oftener. A.

TEST AND CORPORATION ACTS.

THESE detestable and demoralizing acts are at last abolished. Their requiem has been sung, not in solemn dirges, but at the festive board, midst shouts of joy and songs of triumph, in which persons of all parties have united.

A company of 400 persons sat down to a public dinner, at Freemasons hall, London, on the 18th June last; the Duke of Sussex in the chair. Lord Holland, Lord John Russell, and almost all those who distinguished themselves in both houses of Parliament, in favour of Religious Liberty, were present.

IN Liverpool, the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, was celebrated on the 19th of June, by a dinner party of about 160 persons of different religious denominations, many Roman Catholics, and more than 30 Unitarian Ministers were present.

The Rev. W. Shepherd presided on the occasion; his speech which related to the chief object of the meeting, conveyed much information. The Chairman was quite at home on the occasion, and was loudly and repeatedly cheered by the company.

The meeting was addressed by Mr. Henry Booth, Mr. Thomas Fletcher, Mr. O. Wood, Mr. W. Rathbone, Mr. G. W.

* I have stated this that others might know (who are nominated) their labor is not paid for.

Wood, (Manchester ;) the Rev. J. G. Robberds, and the Rev. J. Grundy. M. Roskell, on rising to return thanks for the toast relating to Catholic Emancipation, was received with loud and reiterated applause.

Presentation of a Piece of Plate to the Rev. Charles Berry, Minister of the Unitarian Congregation at Leicester.

A PIECE of plate of more than one hundred guineas value, bearing the following inscription, was lately presented to the Rev. Charles Berry, of Leicester :—

To
The Rev. CHARLES BERRY,
In grateful testimony of
The fidelity, zeal, and affection
With which during a period of twenty-five years,
He has fulfilled the duties of a Christian Minister,
Advocated the cause of Civil and Religious Liberty,
And adorned the intercourse of social life,
This piece of Plate is presented
At the close of a series of Lectures in vindication of
The Unitarian Doctrine,
By the Congregation of the Great Meeting,
Leicester,
March, 1828.

Whatever differences of opinion may exist as to the doctrines of the Unitarians, they have by this munificent act, left no room for any, as to their sentiments towards their worthy and highly respectable Pastor. To receive so flattering a testimony from those to whom we are best known, and of whose approbation we are most desirous; while on the other hand, to be marked as a peculiar object for the vulgar abuse of ignorance and bigotry, as has lately been manifested, is about as unequivocal a proof of merit as can be obtained.

Leicester Chronicle.

Obituary.

Died, June 6th, at Tattershall, Lincolnshire, Mrs. Isabella Wright, wife of the Rev. R. Wright, formerly the Missionary of the London Unitarian Fund, and late of Trowbridge. Mrs. W. was 73 years of age; had lived with her companion in life for 40 years Her death was occasioned by an apopletic fit. Our friends will not return to us here; but we shall meet them on the morn of the resurrection. How important is that gospel, which has brought life and immortality to light; which bids us not to sorry for our departed friends, as those who are without hope. May it be the business of our life here to prepare for that which is to come.

B.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The length and importance of our intelligence must be our apology to Correspondents.

Erratum—In our last, page 148, last line, for " of mildest effection, of brightest converse," read " of mildest affection and of brightest converse."

F. B. Wright, Printer, Castle Street.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—Jesus.

No 44, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d* AUGUST 1, 1828.

REMARKS

Upon some doubtful parts of the Gospels, being the substance of a Lecture delivered at the Old Meeting House, Birmingham, February 1*st*, 1818.

1. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke probably did not exist exactly in their present form before nearly the close of the second century of the Christian Era.

See Euphoni Int. to N. T.

2. From the introduction to Luke, it appears that many written histories of our Lord were extant at the time he composed his gospel, and from a careful examination and comparison of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in the original language, (the Greek,) they appear all to have used one history, which contained all the principal events of the life of Christ, as the basis of their own narratives. The proofs are stated in Eichhorn's Introduction to the New Testament, and in March's Dissertation.

3. The author of this original narrative is unknown, but Matthew, Mark, and Luke, by adopting it, give it the sanction of their own authority.

4. The first two chapters of Matthew, and the first three chapters of Luke, formed no part of this original history.

5. It was probably the same or nearly the same with what is called by the earliest Christian writers, "The memoirs of the Apostles," "The Gospel of the twelve Apostles," and "The Gospel of the Hebrews."

6. The Gospel of Matthew as received and used by the Ebionites or Jewish Christians, did not contain the history of what is called the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ, nor did the Gospel of Luke, as received and used by Marcion and his followers.

7. It is no objection to the character of the Ebionites and of Marcion that they are called heretics. This is merely the consequence of other opinions than those which they entertained becoming the established opinions of the Christian Church; but among the heretics are to be found persons at least equal in talents and in virtue to any of those called orthodox. Though Marcion and the Ebionites are said to have "mutilated" the gospels which they used, there is no proof of any such assertion.

8. Dr. Wall remarks in his critical notes on Matthew, "that there are more difficulties in the first two chapters than in all the Bible besides." (1.) It is found impossible to reconcile the two genealogies in Matthew and Luke with each other; or to reconcile that in Matthew with the Old Testament. (2.) Though Matthew and Luke agree in some respects, in others they differ, and in others seem contradictory. In Luke there is not the least hint of the appearance of the star; the visit of the Magi; the flight into Egypt; or the slaughter of the infants. The whole history of the birth of John the Baptist; the adoration of the shepherds; the purification of Mary; and the story of Anna and Simeon; are entirely unnoticed by Matthew, though these events which occured at Jerusalem, and in its immediate neighbourhood, and were some of them the observation of Jewish ceremonies, might be supposed to be particularly interesting to those Jewish Christians for whose use Matthew's Gospel was more immediately intended. (3.) The slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem is not mentioned by any of the historians of Herod; though an event of such atrocious cruelty must have excited universal attention and abhorrence. (4.) Luke tells us that Jesus was born at Bethlehem; that when eight days were accomplished he was circumcised; that when the days of Mary's purification were over, i. e. at the end of forty days he was brought to Jerusalem and presented to the Lord; and that when his parents

had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee to their own city, Nazareth. The flight into Egypt must therefore have taken place from Nazareth; yet why flee from Nazareth where there was no slaughter, which was out of the dominion of Herod; and from whence to pass into Egypt they must have travelled the whole length of Herod's territories? (5.) They account of a census, or enumeration and taxation of the people by Cyrenius, as given by Luke, is not only unnoticed by Josephus and all other historians, but is inconsistent with the customs of the Romans. Nor was it necessary or customary, when a census did take place, for any one to leave his usual place of residence. He might deliver upon oath, an account of his property, without going to the place where that property might happen to be situated. (6.) If Jesus were about thirty years of age in the fifteenth year of Tiberius, accord to the statement in the third chapter of Luke, he could not have been born till two years after the death of Herod—consequently the story of the visit of the Magi at Jerusalem, and the slaughter of the infants by Herod, cannot be true.

9. There is not the slightest allusion to the supposed miraculous conception of our Lord in any part of the New Testament, except in the introductory chapters of Matthew and Luke. He is always called the son of Joseph; the son of the Carpenter; Jesus of Nazareth; the Galilean; and though these appellations are occasionally used as terms of reproach, yet it is never hinted that they are not justly applied to our Lord,

10. It may be said that the prophecy in Isaiah vii. 14. "Behold a virgin shall conceive &c.," evidently refers to the miraculous conception of Christ, and is so applied by Matthew; but the supposed application by Matthew is in one of those chapters which we have been shewing were not written by the apostle; and the prophecy had in reality no reference to Christ. Isaiah assures Ahaz that before a child then soon to be born should be old enough to distinguish good from evil, he should be delivered from all apprehension of the kings of Israel and Syria, who were then threatening his country. And this was actually the case.

C.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE BEAVER.

THE natural history of the beaver is exceedingly curious. The beavers live in company, build themselves houses which they divide into different apartments, for the author of nature has furnished them with discernment and judgement little short of the reason of man; also with implements suited for the purpose. These are teeth, paws, and tail.

His teeth are strong, and deeply revited into his jaws, with a long and crooked root: with these he cuts, as well the wood with which he builds, as that which furnishes him with his food. His fore-feet resemble those of such animals as hold what they eat in their paws, as apes, for instance, and rats and squirrels; with these feet he digs, softens and works the clay, which is extremely serviceable to him His hind-feet are accomodated with membranes, or large skins, extending between his toes like those of ducks, and all other water-fowl; this makes it evident, that the author of nature intended the creature should be amphibious. His tail is long, a little flat, intirely covered with scales, supplied with muscles, and perpetually lubricated with oil or fat; this animal, who is an architect from its nativity, uses his tail instead of a hod, for the conveyance of his clay or mortar, and a trowel to spread and form it into an incrustation: the scales prevent these materials from penetrating the tail with their coldness and humidity. But the scales, as well as the tail, would be injured by the air and water, were it not for the prevention of an oil, which he distributes all over them with his snout; which he obtains from four bags, which nature has given him, filled with resinous and liquid substance.

The beavers inhabit the same mansion in great numbers, unless violent heats or inundations, the pursuits of hunters, scarcity of provisions, or the extraordinary increase of their offspring, oblige them to separate. In order to raise themselves a convenient abode, they choose themselves a situation that abounds with sustenance, and is washed by a rivulet, and where they may form a convenient reservoir of water for their bagnio. They

begin with building a mole or causey, in which the water may rise to a level with the first story of their habitation, which forms their watering place, and serves to raise the water to a certain height.

This causey, at the foundation, may contain ten or a dozen feet in thickness; it descends in a slope, on the side next the water, which, in proportion to its elevation, gravitates upon the work, and presses it with a strong tendency towards the earth. The opposite side is raised perpendicular like our walls, and the slope, which, at its basis, is twelve feet broad, diminishes towards the top, whose breath does not exceed two feet: the materials of this work are wood and clay. The beavers, with an admirable facility, cut the pieces of wood, some as thick as one's arm, others as large as one's thigh, and from two to four, five, or six feet in length, and sometimes more, in proportion to the ascent of the slope. They drive the extremity of these very near each other, into the earth, and takes care to interlace them with other stakes, more slender and supple. But as the water, without some other prevention, would glide through the cavities, and leave the reservoir dry, they have recourse to a clay, which they perfectly know how to procure, and with which they close up all the interstices both within and without, and this intirely prevents all evacuation. They continue to raise the dike, proportionable to the water's elevation and plenty. They are likewise very sensible, that their materials are not so easily transported by land as by water, and therefore take the opportunity of its increase, to swim, with mortar placed on their tail, and stakes of wood between thier teeth, to every place where they have occasion for these materials. If the violence of the water, or the footsteps of hunters who pass over their work, damage it in any degree, they immediately repair the fracture, visit all the edifice, and, with indefatigable application, refit and adjust whatever happens to be disconcerted. But when they are too frequently persecuted by the hunters, they only work in the night, or else discontinue their labours.

When the causey or Dike is completed, they begin to form their cells, which are round or oval apartments divided into

three partitions, raised one above another. The first is sunk below the level of the dike, and generally full of water; the other two are formed above it. They raise this structure, in a very solid manner, on the edge of their causey, and always in stories, that, in case the water should ascend, they may dwell in an higher situation. If they find any little island near the reservoir, they fix their dwelling there, which is then more solid, and they are less incommoded with the water, in which they are capable of continuing but a short time; but if they are not favoured with this advantage, they drive stakes into the earth with their teeth, to fortify the building against the winds and water. At the bottom they strike out two openings to the stream, one conducts them to the place where they bathe, and which they always keep very decent, the other is a passage to that quarter, where they carry out every thing that would soil or rot the upper apartments. There is a third aperture much higher, calculated to prevent their being shut up, when the ice has closed the openings into the lower lodgements. They sometimes build their house intirely on the dry land, and sink ditches five or six feet deep, in order to descend to the water. They employ the same materials and industry in the structure of their dwelling, as they use for the causey. The walls of the building are perpendicular, and two feet thick. As their teeth are more serviceable than saws, they cut off all the projections from the wood that shoots out beyond the perpendicular of the wall; after which they work up a mixture of clay and dry grass, into a kind of mortar, with which, by the aid of their tails, they rough-cast the out and insides of the work.

The edifice is vaulted within like the handle of a basket, and generally rises in an oval figure. The dimensions are proportioned to the number of the intended inhabitants. Twelve feet in length, and ten in breath, are sufficient for eight or ten beavers. If the number increases, they enlarge the place accordingly. It has been asserted for a truth, that there have been found above four hundred of these creatures, in different lodgements communicating with one another. But these popular societies are very rare, because they are too unmanageable and

tumultous, and the beavers are generally better acquainted with their own interests. They associate to the number of ten or a dozen and sometimes a few more: they are a set of amicable and sagacious inhabitants, in whose mutual society they may propose to pass the winter together, in a very agreeable manner. They are gifted with a natural arithmetic, which enables them to proportion the place and provisions to the necessities of the company; and it is customary for every individual to continue in the constant possession of his own cell, they never charge themselves with unnecessary expences for any accidental guests.

(To be continued.)

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN AND A QUAKER.

DIALOGUE VI.

(Continued from page, 146.)

C But you allow me a right to direct conscience.

Q Yes, if it liketh thy direction. I have the same right.

C You have self-conceit in abundance.

Q When thou art free from it, thy rebuke may be seasonable. I think I have impartiality too: my religion bringeth me no rents, I only seek salvation from it.

C Smart again.

Q Dost thou feel it?

C If I do, I ought to bear it, you know, from a Teacher.

Q I wish thou wert one. I am sure thou hast hitherto taught me nothing. I have fully confuted all thy propositions, and thou hast not answered mine.

C You are too wise a man to be confuted or convinced.

Q By thy arguments, undoubtedly.

C By any arguments.

Q That are insufficient.

C In short, you are the most incorrigible sect living.

Q And art not thou vain to endeavour to correct what thou sayest cannot be corrected?

C I would, at least, do my duty, and save your soul, if I could.

Q My soul is safe in Christ. Knowest thou any other safety?

C Your safety will fail you, if you do not worship him in a proper manner.

Q I believe in him, I pray to him, and to God through him; I pray for his spirit, I seek his will in his word, and beg for light to understand it, and

praise him for it: and I live soberly. Is not this the whole of religion, and religious worship? Canst thou teach me any better?

C If you were to be taught, I could teach you to worship him decently.

Q Thou meanest, I suppose, to bow at sounds, to make legs to a table, and to say after thee. This is not religious worship, but a task which any Infidel can perform; nay, we have creatures amongst us that are not rational, and yet can perform it.

C Was there ever such profane buffoonery?

Q Why truly I think not.

C None but a Pagan could jest thus with sacred things.

Q Thou art mistaken, friend: Pagans reckon them sacred, and solemnized in their temples a number of merry motions, which were a jest to the primitive Christians.

C Good things are not the worse for being abused by the Heathens.

Q True, nor foolish things the wiser for being used by Christians.

C What, do you call the ceremonies of our holy church foolish?

Q No, but to me they are not edifying.

C To me they are, but your heart is hardened.

Q Do not things that are edifying soften the heart? else what are they good for?

C Grace must go along with them.

Q Friend, won't grace do without ceremonies? whoever hath grace, is already edified: and cannot I pray for grace without ceremonies?

C Our church has established them as necessary to decency and edification. Has the authority of the church no weight with you?

Q Yes, great weight, where she erreth not.

C Of which you pretend to judge.

Q Dost thou follow any church without knowing why? or should any man?

C No.

Q Then every man ought to judge of every church, as thou dost; by separating from every church but thy own; doubtless, because thou art most edified by her: and when she edifieth me also, I will also join with her.

Q You ought to join with her; she is the established church.

C If ours were established, wouldest thou join with us?

C How! I join with fanatics!

Q It becometh not me to return ill language; but it is plain that thou valuest not establishments; and why wouldest thou expect it from others, and set up duty against conscience?

C Conscience! cant!

Q By our conscience we must please God; but if it offendeth, I will call it by another name; I will call it opinion. Now, suppose I differ in opinion with thee and thy church, wouldest thou have me be an insincere man, a hypocrite, and a liar, by declaring myself of thy opinion, when I am not?

C No, but——

Q Have patience: I have another question to put to thee.——Wouldest thou have me change my mind, when I cannot change it?

C No man shall tell me it is impossible for him to be of the true religion.

Q I am of the true religion, and so thinks every man; it being every man's nearest interest to be of the best.

C A medley of religions is pernicious to society.

Q Pernicious (if thou pleasest) to the pride of men, who would ride upon society over the belly of conscience. But what hath human society to do with what is in the heart of man concerning a future state, wherewith there can be no human commerce? Human society indeed should beware of those men who, under colour of conducting them to the other world, would engross this; of men who would make the whole body politic their slaves and tenants; and would take so much care of postures and opinions, as to leave them nothing but postures and opinions to take care of.

C A fine harangue, truly! who are the terrible fellows that do or would do all this?

Q All who would bear no religion in the world but their own. The popish clergy have done it; and all other clergy, who make the same demands upon society that they do, would do it. Do not all thy high brethren make the same demands, and contend for all the tyranny, and wealth, and pomp of popery?

C I am not for popery: but I am for the church's having all her own power and lands.

Q That is, thou art for the worst parts of popery, but not for popery. Friend religion claimeth neither power nor lands: our saviour had none, the apostles had none, and we claim none; and we cannot interfere with society, as they do who demand every thing that is great and good in society.

C A pretty fellow to regulate society!

Q I meddle not with society: I only desire protection.

(To be continued.)

INTELLIGENCE.

Anniversary of the Foreign and British Unitarian Association.

We gave in our last as large a portion of the proceedings of this interesting meeting as our space would admit. We now redeem our promise, in giving the following speeches in addition.

Mr. Porter, was particularly obliged for the kind manner in which the company had drunk his health, but he was more obliged for the good wishes they had expressed on behalf of Ireland. He was confident that the manner in which the toast had been received, would cheer the hearts of his Irish friends, and give them nerve to sustain the conflict just approaching with the friends of intolerance, the enemies of free inquiry, and persons who were anxious to lay every restraint upon civil and religious liberty. An attempt had been made, supported by considerable talent, to curtail the privileges enjoyed by the Protestant Dissenters in Ireland; an attempt had been made to introduce a test of religious belief, for the purpose of injuring them. When persons were threatened with these dangers, he knew that the strongest courage was imparted to their hearts, by the consciousness that the hearts of their friends responded to the love of liberty which dwelt in their own. The struggle was not yet over; the Synod of Ulster, to which he had referred, would meet again on the succeeding Tuesday, and at that meeting it was well understood, that the measures which were partially carried into effect at the last, would be again brought forward with renewed vigour. It was, however, one of the good signs of the times, that the struggle which the independent men of the Synod of Ulster made against them, had extended their influence to a distance of 500 miles. He hoped his friends would receive the encouragement which the proceedings of the present company were calculated to afford; they required but little excitement to induce them to perform their duty; but he thought the proceedings of this day would animate them to discharge it heartily. He thought that as the account of this meeting would, in all probability, find its way to the north of Ireland, that the sentiments expressed by the Chairman would have a considerable influence in strengthening the hands of the persons to whom they alluded. At one time he entertained a feeling that he could not conscientiously join the Unitarian body, but his prejudices had been removed, and that principally by the liberality with which he had been treated by the Unitarian Association. He apprehended, in reference to the struggle in Ireland, that the distribution of a few religious tracts, in which the broad Unitarian principles were openly and candidly discussed, would be of considerable service in that country; he therefore applied to Dr. Rees, who, contrary to his expectations, gratuitously supplied him with tracts to the value of 10*l*. This was an instance of liberality of which it was impossible for him not to be deeply sensible.

The Rev. Mr. Aspland rose to return thanks. The great kindness with which his name had been received, in one respect humbled him, but in another respect afforded him unalloyed

pleasure; because he had no claim on their approbation but as connected, and that accidentally, with the great cause which they were met to celebrate. He never yet had been able to admit, with the orthodox, that he was the worst of sinners; for even when he was in his infancy, he had a controversy with his mother on this subject, and she admitted that he beat her. He contemplated his connexion with this Association with much pleasure, and he felt equal gratification in rising to advocate its claims. It had been said that they were a Society of proselyters. This was true, but then every man would see the difference between the mode of proselyting they adopted, and that which was adopted by others; other societies were anxious to convert men from one set of opinions to another, but they were solicitous to establish them in principles. He sincerely congratulated his Unitarian friends present, on their having obtained for themselves and their children a wonderful triumph. There were, it is true, exceptions to the bill which had been obtained, (and would they blot out the sun from the heavens because of a speck in its surface,) but, notwithstanding, they had a ground of triumph, and he would say, the Dissenters would be unworthy of themselves if they did not rejoice. He would say, with Lord Holland, that he was not only satisfied, but overjoyed; and he doubted not, that historians would record the day when the Test and Corporation Acts were repealed, as the period which witnessed the Dissenters' noblest conquest. They had fought the ministers, and beat them, and they had now thrown away their swords, and were received as friends; by the laws of chivalry they were so received, because they had thrown away their weapons. No one would be more glad than himself to see every restriction, on account of religion, removed; but though we could not get all the partition down at once, we must be content to pull down one brick after another, till the whole should be thrown down. A celebrated nobleman had said, that if he could not get a cart load of rubbish carred away, he would be glad to get rid of a barrow full, and if not a barrow full, a shovel full. Now the Dissenters had not only got a shovel full of rubbish removed, but a barrow full, and by perseverance we might eventually succeed in getting the whole cart load removed. What other Society would receive Unitarians and men of other denominations as brothers. The members of this Society were Christians, and, as such, felt bound to receive every man, (come from whence he might,) who came with the common claims of humanity. There was not a sect on the face of the earth loaded with more contempt, than the one with which himself and his friends around him were connected. There had been rumours, (but the public press was not always to be trusted,) that in a certain house, a house which he was not at liberty to name,—charges of an unpleasant nature had been made against their

body. He would not say it was a bad house. The newspaper reporters were accountable for their own reports; and he could not for a moment think that reporters could get into the House of Lords; but he had heard rumours, that certain great persons had accused the Unitarians that they could not take an oath in the name of Christ. Much had been said of the march of intellect; yet he conceived that intellect could never have marched into the House where the reporters were in the habit of going! But it must be all a mistake! The reverend gentleman then made some further reference to rumours circulated by the reporters, of certain charges of incompetency having been made against the Dissenters, and expressed his surprise that persons who were ignorant of their own professed creed, and who could not answer questions (particulary with reference to the Athanasian Creed), without a great number of mistakes, should have the temerity to attack the creed of others. Would they tell him that he was not a Christian! And yet these newspaper reporters had dared to attribute to certain persons the assertion, that not only were Unitarians not Christians, but that they ought to be excluded from the Legislature. He should be delighted with half an hour's conversation with the Lord to which this language had been ascribed. He would say to him, "Did you ever hear of John Milton?" And he might answer, yes, or no; then he would say to him, that John Milton was an Unitarian, and the king has proved him such, by allowing publicity to be given to his works. He would ask him again, "Did you ever hear of Sir Isaac Newton?" and he was an Unitarian; and what would they say of John Locke, the man they read and held in such high admiration? would they give him up? and yet he had been confessed a low Arian; and he (the Rev. gentleman) received any Arian as his brother, and a low Arian was not distinguishable from any other. He really was disgusted when this charge of not being Christians was brought against this Society. Why were they Unitarians, if they were not Christians? Which of them had not suffered for this cause? From the earliest period of his connection with this Association, he had given himself a sacrifice to the doctrines he professed. But to talk of them as being Unitarians, and not Christians! he would say, it was the foulest libel (and he thanked the chairman for saying so) that ever disgraced humanity. The Rev. gentleman then referred to some writers of eminence, who, he asserted, must be ranked with Unitarians, and afterwards adverted to his attachment to the cause of liberty.

Dr. Rees rose, amidst loud applause, and said, he should ill requite the kindness they had displayed in drinking his health, were he to detain the meeting by a long speech. He trusted he felt the compliment which had been paid to him for the services

rendered the Association. It was only one year that he had been the servant of this Association, it was true, that he had been fourteen years book secretary, and had served three apprenticeships in the book society of the metropolis; he therefore hoped he should be released from his indentures at the next anniversary. He had heard a great deal of the march of intellect, and of the great changes which had taken place in the knowledge, feelings, and principles of mankind. Now by what means had this great improvement been effected? by the circulation, and through the means of books. Let the company look back, and ask themselves what was the state of the Unitarian cause in the year 1791, when the book society was formed? why, the few zealous friends who formed that Institution, were afraid to give publicity to their meetings: they met as by stealth and a friend of his, who had lately died, and who had been in the habit of attending the Society, was officially questioned as to nature of the subjects which had been brought before the company. He believed that it was owing to the exertions of that Society, that the present assembly met in such circumstances of comfort and peace, he therefore hoped that the Society would never be deserted. The Rev. gentleman, after adverting to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, concluded by assuring the company, that in whatever situation he was placed, the book department was a branch of the Association which would at all times command a proper degree of his attention.

Synod of Ulster.

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years."

REV. xx. 1, 2.

FROM what has lately taken place in England, in the abolition of the Corporation and Test Acts, which had for so many years disgraced our Statute Book, we were led to hail the approach of the period when the above prophecy would receive its accomplishment. But our fond anticipations seem to be without foundation. The old dragon of religious bigotry and intolerance, which lately popped his head into the Presbytery of Glasgow, has appeared in *propria persona*, in full form and proportion, plump as in times of yore, in the SYNOD of ULSTER. His prime agent

in the person of Mr. Morell, anxious to guard the heathenish doctrine of Tritheism; to check the energies of the youthful mind; and to prevent that spirit of rational enquiry, and fearless investigation, which these very men themselves so strongly insist on, in their controversies with the Roman Catholics; proposed a TEST, to be taken by all candidates for the christian ministry. The following are the principal articles of this ABOMINABLE DOCUMENT.

3 "That before any person be recognized as a candidate for the Ministry in the Church, he shall be enjoined to present himself at an annual meeting, previously to his entering a theological class, before a Committee of the Synod, who shall examine him respecting his personal religion, his knowledge of the Scriptures, and especially his views of the doctrines of the Trinity, Justification by Faith, and regeneration by the Spirit; and his motives for offering himself as a candidate for the sacred office of a Minister of the Gospel.

4 "That Students, after having finished their theological course, and their trials in the Presbytery, shall again present themselves for a similar examination before the same Committee; and it shall be the duty of that Committee to ascertain their soundness in the Faith, by requiring from them a statement of their views of the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

5 "That if any person thus licensed shall afterwards be found not to preach the doctrines of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, or to avow any principles in opposition to those doctrines, he shall not be continued in fellowship with the Ministers of this body.

6 "Should any person be licensed or ordained in opposition to the above regulations, such license or ordination shall not be deemed valid by this body."

This test did not appear to the Rev. Mr. Cooke strong enough, this *Ultra Orthodox* gentleman proposed the following amendment—(we give the amended clauses only.)

3 "That before any person be recognized as a candidate for the Ministry, he shall, previously to entering a theological class, be enjoined to present himself at our annual meeting, to be examined by a Committee of this Synod, respecting his personal religion, his knowledge of the Scriptures, especially his views of the Trinity, Original Sin, Justification by Faith, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit; and likewise as to his motives for offering himself as a candidate for the sacred office of the Ministry; and that should any such examinant be found opposed to those doctrines, or appear to be destitute of vital Godliness, he shall, in no case, be recognized as a candidate for the Ministry in this Synod.

4 "That Students, after having finished their theological course, and their trial in the Presbytery, shall again present themselves for a similar examination before the same Committee; and it shall be the duty of that Committee to ascertain their soundness in the Faith, by requiring from them a statement of their views of the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

5 "That if any person thus licensed be afterwards found not to preach the doctrines of the Trinity, Original Sin, and Justification by faith, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, or to avow any principles in opposition to these doctrines, he shall not be continued in fellowship with this body.

6 "Persons who are already Preachers in this body, but have not been licensed according to these regulations, shall, previously to ordination, be required to undergo a similar examination.

7 "Should any person be licensed or ordained in opposition to these regulations, such license or ordinatiou shall not be deemed valid by this body."

This gave rise to a very spirited and long debate. Some of the orthodox proved themselves to be fit members of the Inquisition of *Madrid* or *Goa*, and seem to be just as able to define the meaning of the term *Christian*, as a Lord Inquisitor of Goa once was, to define the meaning of the word *heresy;* he said it was a *zigzag path*, and the man who could not walk straight forward,—that is he who could not assent to all the dogmas of orthodoxy, was a Heretic!!! He who cannot subscribe to the dogmas of their Reverences of Ulster, cannot, on the same ground, be a Christian!!!

On our first reading the speeches of these *Tritheistical* Fathers, we were inclined to laugh at their ignorance and folly: but our couscience reproved and reminded us, that such arrogance, such wickedness in *high places*, called rather for serious condemnation and abhorrence than for mirth; we believe the warning to be just, and do from our hearts condemn such proceedings of these would-be lords over God's heritage. Happily for Britain, and also for Ireland, that although the spirit of the persecutors of BIDDLE, and of those who brought poor young AIKENHEAD to the stake rests upon them, the prophetic energies no longer exist, the age of working miracles is gone by; and although thought dragon may hiss and extend his claws, the spirit of the age has spell-bound him, and he is retreating to that *hell* from which he rose, and in which he will be annihilated.

What has tended to increase our surprise at this ebulition of *priestcraft*, is, that the very CREATURES, who bear the christian name, who are loud and vociferous against the lordly claims of the Bishop of Rome; who are ever advocating the full, the complete sufficiency of scripture, should make the *horrid* catalogue of opinions contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, (than which a fouler libel on the character of God was never published) the test and standard of the qualifications of a christian minister—nay even of a candidate for the chris-

tian ministry who has much to study, to examine, to investigate; before his opinions can be in any wise matured—He is to profess his assent to doctrines which he has never had time to examine, and of which his knowledge must indeed be very imperfect.

These youths are, in the first place taught to make their creed from the *bible*, yet when they come before these lords of conscience, which compose the *Synod*, they are bound to exclaim, "Not the *Bible* but the WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH," "Not this man but Barabbas."—Now Barabbas was *only* a *robber*, but the assembly of Divines, who sat at Westminster, were *murderers ! ! !* Alas ! what an inconsistent animal is sometimes a Reverend Divine.

After all, we think Mr. Cooke's ameudment is very deficient; had we had the *disgrace* to have been in that assembly, we would have proposed an *anathema*, for want of this the work is very imperfect.

We had thought of analysing and abridging the whole debate, but we have not room ; we shall return to this subject; it cannot have too great publicity. We cannot, however, conclude these brief remarks without paying a tribute of respect, and of thanks to Mr. Simms for his firm and manly conduct. It would give us much pleasure to shake him by the hand and bid him God speed.—We do most sincerely hope that his example will have its full weight with our young men, to whom we look, with no small degree of solicitude, knowing that they will be called to fill our places in the church of Christ, when the icy hand of death shall stop our animal functions, and we shall be consigned to the house appointed for all living. We say to them, and we say it in earnestness, we say it in affection, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good,"—"Call no man master on earth, one is your master even Christ." Say to those who would usurp dominion over your conscience," JESUS I know, and PAUL I know, but who are YE?—We will not bow down to the idol you have set up in the plain of the modern Dura.

We have much pleasure in recommending to our readers' attention the excellent speech of the Rev. F. Blakely, we should have

been glad to have given others, but our limits will not at this time admit.

For the passing of this test	99	Ministers,
	40	Elders.
	189	
Not pass.	40	Min.
	17	Elders.
	57	Majority 82.

We recommend that a list of the names of the majority and minority be published. Posterity will do them justice.

Mr. FLETCHER BLAKELY, (of Moneyrea,) spoke to the following effect:—I rise to oppose the amended overture with the best of my ability; and, in doing so, while it is well known that I am no Trinitarian, I wish it to be understood that I am not a disciple of Arius or Socinus. As gross misrepresentations, however, of the sentiments of these persons have been made in this assembly, I may, before I conclude, claim your indulgence in stating them from some authorities that cannot fairly be disputed. This may be deemed a departure from the question; but I do, notwithstanding, pledge myself to keep closer to it than any speaker that has gone before me. And, in pursuing this course, I must forget all popular feelings which have been so frequently and so shamefully appealed to, and speak as if in the hearing of God alone, whose all-seeing eye is every where present. I have heard, Sir, much pompous declamation concerning religious liberty, and the right of private judgment; but as nothing definite has been said, I am at a loss to know whether the gentlemen who have supported the amendment, mean their own religious liberty and right of private judgment, or those of their brethren. In either case, I would humbly recommend them to remember one beautiful passage of Scripture; "If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's." Notwithstanding the high sounding phrases which have been used in connexion with religious liberty, I am surprised that this liberty is so badly understood and so sadly abused. In the exercise of the right of private judgment, I have taken Christ for my Master; and, however much some may be alarmed, I tell you candidly and boldly, that I have *now no liberty to serve other masters:* and I trust, that neither the fear of persecution nor of death shall influence me to break my engagement, and choose Synods or Councils in his stead. "One is my Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren;"—"No man can serve two masters;"—Even the Apostles, who were divinely inspired, said to the early disciples, "not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy."

I have heard long and loud speeches respecting the sufficiency of the Scriptures, as a perfect rule of faith and practice; and, if I be not much misinformed, there have been long and loud lectures delivered, by some of my Orthodox brethren now present, to convince the Roman Catholics of the perfection of the Sacred Scriptures for these purposes. But how unaccountably strange is it, that these very gentlemen are attempting to establish, in this place, the very things which they wished to free the Roman Catholics of in another place. It would be a most glorious boast, if their conduct were in unison with their profession; but the gentlemen who are one moment strenuous in urging the importance and sufficiency of Scripture in all matters of religion, are, the next, noisy in advocating the necessity of human creeds and confessions. Be it remembered, that Jesus Christ is, to every humble disciple, not only "the *author*, but the *finisher* of his faith." "All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works:" not merely furnished, but *thoroughly* furnished. Besides, if this amended overture contains nothing but what is in the Scriptures, it is superfluous; and, if it contain any thing contrary to the Scriptures, it should be rejected. If any suppose the Scriptures not plain enough to be a rule and centre of union, how shall we mend the matter? Can we express the ideas of Jesus Christ in clearer and better terms than himself? Can we express the ideas of his Apostles, who wrote and preached under the inspiration of God in plainer and better words than they? Can we put our ideas on an equal footing with any of these? Can we we improve that which we declare to be perfect? If all the Synods and Councils in the world should make this presumptuous attempt, they cannot have my concurrence. For there can be no medium between an earthly infallible head of the Church, and the sufficiency of the word of God: if any such medium can be found, let it be pointed out. No individual in this large assembly dare assume the right of dictating to me in matters of faith; and if no individual will attempt it, how can numbers create the right? You might as well, Sir, think to make an arithmetical sum out of noughts. We must understand the Scriptures before we can make a *rule* by which the Scriptures are to be understood; and yet, according to the views of my brethren on the other side, we must apply that rule for understanding the Scriptures, which we must have understood before it was made! This is evidently most strange and preposterous. If we cannot bind a man's conscience by the divine word of God, no human composition, however excellent, can bind him: and, in proportion as we fix our affections on human and fallible creeds, and tests, and articles, in the same proportion must we forget the divine and infallible creed contained in the Holy Bible. And it is absolute mockery to grant the right of private judgment in the examination of the Bible, and then reproach and injure a man, because he cannot see every passage in the same light as his neighbour, who is as liable to err as himself.

It has been said, that the object of human creeds is to establish *uniformity*. When and where, Sir—in what church or country, or kingdom, has this uniformity been established? Attempts, without number, have been made: and they have failed. The celebrated Lord Chatham, when speaking in his capacity as a senator, said, of one of the most learned churches in the world, "we have a Calvinistic creed, a Popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy." There may be a pretended uniformity,—there may be an usurped authority, which may injure the best feelings of our nature, and hurt the best charities of life. But what want of uniformity has been exemplified in the supporters of human tests and standards, and of this strange and unexpected overture, may be seen before we conclude, by appeals to the living and the dead. Before I proceed to notice this pretended uniformity, I beg leave to notice the singular sentiments of my friend, Mr. Barnett; for whose head and heart I have a high regard. He has urged the great dangers of Arianism, and the great advantage of a church being of the same faith,—of one mind. How strange is it, that Mr. Barnett left a church, professing to be of one mind, and volunteered in uniting himself to one, where there is such a variety of opinion, and in which there are so many dangers! (Hear, hear, from all quarters.) I say to him if he be so much alarmed, repent and return to that church pretending to uniformity. I am utterly astonished at the expressions of Mr. Francis Dill, in referring to the Confession of Faith as the ancient standard of this Church. He has pleaded his youth in asking for information; but I must tell him, and, in doing so, I do not wish to wound his feelings, nor those of any other individual in this large assembly, that, on account of his age, I wonder at his ignorance. This Church, I tell him, was long established before the Confession of Faith was compiled, and even before the present translation of the Scriptures was made. I might have referred him to the sexton of my congregation for information on these particulars. I thank you, Sir, for your indulgence and I shall now proceed, under your protection, to give some authorities to prove the shamefulness of the attacks that have been made upon me and my friends, and how fruitless have been the attempts at uniformity among Trinitarians themselves. I am asked to name my authorities, and I reply, that I shall be happy to lend the original works to any gentlemen who calls the authorities in question.

Can any one really believe, that the Unitarians are to be classed with infidels? Is a man, who believes that Jesus was a teacher sent from God, that he taught the words of eternal life, that he wrought miracles, that he was raised from the dead, that he ascended into heaven, and that, in due time, he will return to raise the dead and judge the world, and who governs his conduct by the faith and hope of the gospel—is this man no Christian? Is he to be regarded as a blasphemer and an infidel, as one who brands Jesus as an impostor, and his gospel as a fable? Was Lardner an infidel?—Lardner, whom all parties agree to praise, and who has done more to establish the truth

and to exemplify the spirit of Christianity, than almost any writer since the age of the apostles? Yet, Lardner was an Unitarian—he believed no Trinity. And if Lardner, and they who think with Lardner, are to be excluded from the pale of Christian communion, who is entitled to admission? In a dark and barbarous age, when ignorance and bigotry were universal, and a degraded laity were the abject slaves of a miserable and unlettered priesthood, nothing was too absurb for an arrogant priest to teach, or an ignorant and priest-ridden layman to believe. But that hour is passed. And it is rather too much for a man of sense and learning, who knows any thing of the world, in the present liberal and inquisitive age, to affect to thunder out anathemas upon those who hold different opinions from his own, and to consign to everlasting torments men whose characters are unimpeached, merely because they cannot subscribe to his metaphysical creed, because they prefer the doctrine of Dr. Wallis to that of Bishop Gastrell, the doctrine which was formerly approved by the University of Oxford, to that which has lately been sanctioned by the University press.

Let every man, according to the Apostolic rule, "freely enjoy his own opinion." Let Unitarians believe with Dr. Wallis, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are no more three distinct intelligent persons, than the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, are three Gods: and let Dr. Sherlock and his partisans believe, if they like, that the three persons of the Trinity are as much three distinct infinite minds, as Peter, James, and John, are three men. Let the Athanasian believe that the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty, and yet there are not three Almighties, but one Almighty; while Dr. Burnet and his followers maintain that the Son and the Holy Ghost are created beings, and are Gods only by the indwelling of the Father's Godhead. Let Bishop Horsley and his admirers contend that the Father produced the Son by contemplating his own perfections, and refuse to assign a reason why he produced no more than one. Let Bishop Gastrell and Dr. Moysey believe, *if they can*, that the *Father* 'includes the whole idea of God, and *something more*;' that the *Son* 'includes the whole idea of God, and *something more*;' and that the *Holy Ghost* 'includes the whole idea of God, and *something more*;' while, altogether, they make up one complete God, and *nothing more*. And let Bishop Burgess, on the contrary, believe, *if it be possible*, that the *Father* is a *person*, but '*not a being*;' the *Son* is a *person*, but '*not a being*;' and the *Holy Ghost* is a *person*, but '*not a being*; and that these three personal non-entities make *one perfect Being*. Let Mr. Heber maintain, if he pleases, the extraordinary position, that the Father is the first person in the Trinity, the Archangel Michael the second, and the Angel Gabriel the third: let all these gentlemen, and their numerous adherents, enjoy their respective opinions with the most unrestrained freedom: let them profess their principles as publicly as they please, and let them propagate these doctrines with zeal proportioned to their apprehended

importance; but let them, at the same time, beware not to exceed their just limits; let them not invade the rights of their neighbour; let them not set themselves up as lords over other men's consciences; let them not presume to erect the little shiboleth of their own party as the test of evangelical truth; let them not usurp the authority of Christ, and reject those who acknowledge him as their master and head, and who yield ready and unfeigned assent to whatever doctrine it is proved that he has taught, but who assume to themselves that liberty of judgment which they concede to others, and who cannot see the evidence of many opinions, which pass currently for the peculiarities of the Gospel, and upon which many are disposed to lay the greatest stress.

Besides the authorities which I have now quoted, to prove the *want of uniformity* of faith among those who have subscribed the same human tests, I must acknowledge, Sir, that I am ashamed to notice the strange, paradoxical, and contradictory arguments that have been advanced, by different orthodox members, against Arians, Socinians, and Unitarians. I must assert, and I do it with humility and charity, that they are utterly unacquainted with the systems to which they have referred. In Dr. Evans' well known sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World, under the article on Arianism, it is stated, "Arius owned Christ to be God in a subordinate sense, and considered his death to be a propitiation for sin. The Arians acknowledge that the Son was the *Word*, though they deny its being eternal; contending, that it had only been created prior to all other beings. Christ, say they, had nothing of man in him, except the flesh, with which the Logos, or word, spoken of by the Apostle John, was united, which supplied the rest. The Arians, though they deny that Christ is the *eternal God*, yet they contend against others for his *pre-existence*. His pre-existence they found on the two following passages, among many others:—'*Before* Abraham was, I am:' and the prayer of Jesus—'Glorify me with that glory, which I had with thee *before* the world began.' These, and other texts of a similar kind are, in their opinion, irrefragable proofs that Christ did actually exist in another state before he was born of the Virgin Mary, in the land of Judea." But, without longer detaining you on this point, one of our brethren, notwithstanding their boasted uniformity, says, we are Atheists,—that is having, no God; another says, we are Deists,—that is having a God; and, however unaccountable it may be, Mr. Elder, whose age obliges me to respect him, has said, we are both Deists and Atheists,—that is having at the same time, a God, and no God. One orthodox member says, we deny Christ; another says, we believe in Christ: the former says, that we rest for salvation upon the merit of our own good works, though he should know that, without exception, we trust for salvation to the free, unpurchased mercy of God, as revealed in his word. The latter charges us with denying good works, though he should remember that disgraces and degradations have been confined to his orthodox brethren. (Order order.) Yes, confined to his Trinitarian friends. To crown the uniformity,

an aged member has, in his own peculiar manner, called us Infidels, though he expects to meet us in heaven.

I must again, Sir, mourn, and lament, and deplore, that men, professing Christianity—that Ministers of the Gospel, and who have had opportunities for obtaining information, should expose themselves by making such rash and erroneous statements. This moment, one, judging by the inhabitants of our bleak mountains and sequestered glens, tells us, that we are decreasing. The next, another, judging by the 500 Unitarian Congregations of England, and the 1000 of America, and which have been erected in less than 50 years, talks of danger with alarm; I tell these gentlemen, that, were all the Arians and Unitarians of this island flung to the north star, they cannot prevent men from judging for themselves. Mr. John Brown has had recourse to arithmetic, as an argument in favour of his cause; and, if he wish, according to his own observations, to be influenced by numbers, he should pass from Presbyterianism into the Church of England, and from that into the Church of Rome—where he may add the Virgin Mary to the number of his Gods. It is more than marvellous, that he should have recourse to the arguments of numbers being on his side, when he must be aware, that the history of science, and the history of religion, puts this claim of the majority to the blush, and shows that the propagation of Christianity was the work of *individual minds*, in opposition to the will and wishes of the *multitude*;—that Copernicus and Gallileo advanced philosophy under a persecution which was popular;—and that Luther and Calvin, and Zuinglius, brought on the Reformation, when opposed by the great mass of the people. Even the hatred of one Trinitarian Church to another has been pressed forward, as an evidence and a zeal, to prove the truth of the Trinity: and, I must say, if railing will pass for criticism, reproach for argument, and contradiction for proof, that to these gentlemen I freely yield the victory. *They* may appeal to the public feeling; *we* appeal not from Festus to Cæser; but from man to God. And, I add, that I have, in some measure, been confirmed in my present views, by the immoralities of Trinitarians, and rejoice in having brought persons to the table of Christ, who were driven almost into unbelief, by the crimes and creeds of the Orthodox. What now, Sir, shall be said of this boasted uniformity! On my right hand, I see Calvinists with their five points; on my left, I see Arminians with their opposite five points, and claiming on both sides, the names Orthodox and Evangelical. Nay, more—much more; they all lay claim to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Were not this a mere pretence, we should have a sure and safe guide to uniformity. But one orthodox spirit is frequently at variance with another orthodox spirit, though both the spirits pretend to be of God. They may pretend what they please; but as for us, we must return to Moses in the Law, and to Christ in the Gospel. Personal piety is mentioned in the amended overture, and is, undoubtedly, of great moment. But to those who wish to encourage it in others, I would respectfully remark, that humility is the

first lesson which we learn from diligent reflection, and self-distrust the first proof we give of having obtained a knowledge of ourselves. I could speak many hours on the question before the house, but am aware that your time is too precious to claim such indulgence. I invite, however, any of my orthodox brethren to meet me with his Bible in his hand, and discuss with me the important points at issue.

UNITARIANISM IN THE EAST INDIES.

We copy the following very pleasing intelligence from "The Christian Examiner, and Theological Review;" a valuable periodical published at Boston, U. S. North America.—We have no doubt it will be read with considerable interest by all who are in the habit of reading the Christian Reflector; and especially when they are informed that the Trinitarian Missionaries in Calcutta and its vicinity, are more opposed to christianity than the Hindoos. The orthodox who monopolize the name of Christian, cannot bear the idea that their pagan system should be exposed; and yet with it they can make no progress. The Heathen reason, and reason justly, that it can be but of little moment, if there be more Gods than one, whether a man stops at the number THREE, or extends that number to THREE THOUSAND. We are of the same opinion.

Letter from Mr. Adam of Calcutta.

The following note from Dr. Tuckerman, contains extracts from the first letter that has been received from Mr. Adam since his entering upon the active labors of his mission.

'To the Editor of the Christian Examiner.'

'Sir,—I have great pleasure in being able to tell you that, by a late arrival from Calcutta, I have received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Adam, in which he tells me, that he has been successful in exciting the attention of the community there, to the claims of pure Christianity, to an extent beyond his most sanguine expectations. He says, "the English morning service, which I commenced in August, was very indifferently attended. But an

evening course of lectures, which I began on the first Sunday of that month, has been numerously and respectably attended. The subject of the lectures is the doctrine of the divine Unity, in all its aspects and relations to Trinitarianism, to Polytheism, &c. * * * When I speak of our service being *numerously* attended, I mean, with reference to our expectations, and to the congregations which usually assemble in Calcutta churches and chapels. * * * But, besides the mere attendance, there is a spirit of inquiry abroad, the effects of which I will not venture to anticipate. Several persons, formerly Trinitarians, have avowed themselves Unitarians; and within a month our subscription list for general and incidental expenses, has risen from thirty or forty rupees a month, to one hundred and fifty per month. Nor is the amount thus subscribed made up of large sums, from a few weathy individuals; but of small sums, from about thirty different persons. * * * About the middle of October, also, I began a course of familiar lectures on the first principles of religion, to a small congregation of Natives, but all of them respectable and intelligent, and affording their voluntary attendance at a fixed hour on a stated day. * * * Cannot you send me a co-adjutor in the labors in which I am engaged? * * * I will only add that my hands are full of work, and that my heart is full of hope; and that I feel myself happy, and useful, and grateful to the merciful providence of God, for all the way in which he has led me."

'This intelligence, I doubt not, will gladden many, as it certainly does

'Yours, very truly,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

'April, 1828.'

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Several favours must stand over. The importance of the matter contained in our pages must speak for us.

F. B. Wright, Printer, Castle Street, Liverpool.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—Jesus.

No 45, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d* SEPTEMBER 1, 1828.

POPULAR RELIGIOUS ERRORS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

Sir,

Having long observed your anxious solicitude, to establish among your readers what you think to be a system of religious truth, allow me to lay before them a few remarks, on what I conceive to be popular religious errors, as they have also a tendency to promote the great object you have in view, viz. that of simplifying our systems of religious faith, and rendering them more practically influencial among professing christians.

The first error to which I shall direct their attention, is the popular notion entertained respecting what is termed original sin, or the fall of man, and the consequent guilt which became attached to the whole human race in consequence of Adam's disobedience. That Adam at the instant of his creation was perfectly free from moral guilt, must be evident to the slightest consideration, for his body was formed out of the dust of the earth, and his spirit was an emanation from God; therefore his frail propensities had not then been exercised, nor his passions aroused into action, consequently he was like a new born infant, completely innocent in thought, word, and deed; nevertheless when his passions and wayward propensities were put to an active trial, his frailties become evident, and he fell from that state of angelic purity, in which he was placed at his first creation, but this fall from innocence involved in it no unexpected change, that affected the design of his probationary condition, for the

good and all-wise Creator had formed him with these erring propensities, and placed him in a state of probation, that he might bestow upon him such favours and dispensations, to counteract this liability to error; that would establish the wisdom of providence, and prove the fatherly goodness, and never ceasing regard which he entertained for the welfare and happiness of his numerous and rational offspring.

Here then we see, that this fall from innocence, which the religious world has so far mystified, as to render it incomprehensible, was simply a change that naturally resulted from the very constitution that was imparted to our first parents, in order to show the fatherly providence of God, by which he is perpetually aiding our moral infirmities, as set forth in the unadulterated gospel of Christ. That a plain and simple, yet an effectual faith, will ultimately triumph over our present confused and unintelligable dogmas, I have not the slightest doubt; and the Apostle James has done more towards establishing this glorious change, than any other sacred writer, for his writings are free from pharisaic quibbling, and shew that he has imbibed the spirit of his great master; a spirit that is equally opposed to the wild ravings of fanaticism, and the useless mummery of superstition, that acknowledges no religiou but that of the heart, that invokes no zeal but what is governed by a love of God and man, and which has a uniform tendency to make more righteous, and gradually prepare us for the kingdom of heaven.

Impressed with these sentiments, I intend to trouble you with another epistle the first convenient season, and beg leave to subscribe myself, yours, most faithfully,

PHILO JAMES.

Wavertree, August 16th, 1828.

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

(Continued from page 157.)

ARTICLES

Agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both provinces, and the whole Clergy in the Convocation holden at London, in the year 1562.

That is to say, a set of men who had the same infirmities and imperfections as their fellow-creatures, assembled in a large room, and thought proper to dictate to their brethren certain articles which they called religious, and which they required all persons to believe and profess, who held the situation of christian teachers. Now it is evident to any human being, who will not be imposed upon by names and splendour, that the creeds, or articles of these Archbishops and Bishops, are no better than the written opinions of some of the dissenting ministers of various denominations. But the truth is, that neither the opinions of clergymen, nor of dissenting ministers, should at all bias the opinions of mankind. The ministers of religion should be looked up to as the teachers of religion, and should be respected when their conduct is exemplary; but in all cases their opinions should be disregarded, unless strictly correspondent with the doctrines of the Bible. The Bible, and the Bible only should be the foundation of every christian's faith.

"His Majesty" (says a sensible author,) in his declaration prefixed to the articles, prohibits his loving subjects the least difference from them, or putting their own sense upon them, but requires them to be taken in the literal or grammatical sense." And yet Archdeacon Payley attempts to prove that any one may subscribe who is not a Papist, a Puritan, or a Baptist! How unworthy such a writer! The articles however are generally allowed to be *Calvinistical.*

Of faith in the Holy Trinity.

By the term person, I understand an intelligent agent. How then can there be three omnipotent intelligent agents? and how can these three be *but* one infinite being? For an easy refutation of this irrational and unscriptural doctrine, see "Dr. Carpenter's Unitarianism the Doctrine of the Gospel."

It may be necessary here also to inquire, what are we to believe by the the word Trinity? Calvin has said, "The word Trinity is barbarous, insiped, profane—a human invention, grounded on no testimony of the word of God;" and almost every other professed believer in this dogma gives a different

explanation of this stumbling block to christianity. Dr. Sherlock (says Mr. Lindsey) asserted that the three persons in the Trinity, are three distinct infinite minds, or spirits, and three individual substances. Dr. South held only one infinite eternal mind or spirit, with three somethings, that were not three distinct minds or substances, but three modes or faculties, attributes, relations, relative properties, subsistences as they were variously denominated. Dr. Sherlock was accused, and with great justice, if words have any meaning, of polytheism, or holding *three Gods*. Dr. South, on the other hand, came under the imputation of explaining away the Trinity and falling into the Sabellian or Unitarian system.

Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things apertaining to the perfection of man's nature; wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

So then, God, who is a *Spirit*, must now, according to the Trinitarian hypothesis, have "flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the nature of man!" Surely, if ever there was a contradiction, this is one. "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Luke xxiv. 37.

The Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son.

The Holy Ghost, or more properly translated the Holy Spirit, is invariably used in scripture to signify the only living and true God, in the same sense as Jehovah or Lord; or his power and influence, and never as a person of the Trinity. In the New Testament, the Spirit is spoken of as being measured and poured out, which language would be ridiculous as applicable to a person, but quite natural when properly applied.

See an admirable tract on the Impersonality of the Holy Ghost by Mr. Marsom.

All the books of the New Testament, as commonly received, we do receive, and account them Canonical.

Dr. Lardner, that great and good man, was of a different

opinion, and I believe his testimony is of more weight than that of a host of Bishops. The following he considers disputed books, and concerning which he says, that they should be allowed to be publicly read in christian assemblies for the edification of the people, but not be alleged as affording alone sufficient proof of any doctrine.

"Epistle to the Hebrews—Epistle of James—2 Peter—2 John —3 John—Jude—Revelation."

Both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ.

I cannot find it stated any where in the Old Testament, that Jesus Christ offered any thing to mankind. On the contrary, the New Testament informs us, that Christ was not born until a long time after the death of the last Jewish prophet. That his coming is predicted in the Old Testament, all christians gratefully believe; but that he was at that time *already* come, when it is said that he should *hereafter come*, is a contradiction to which no rational being can assent. Indeed, the fact of his coming being *predicted*, is a clear proof that he had not then appeared.

Of the Three Creeds.

I have before shewn that these creeds, like the articles of the Church of England, are unscriptural, and fabricated by ambitious priests.

Of Original or Birth-Sin.

"Man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation."

Can any reflecting man believe that an all-merciful and good God, would create any being deserving his wrath and damnation? It is a contradiction in terms. Give me leave also to ask the advocates of their own doctrine, what "infection of nature" is to be found in little children, when Jesus Christ has said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven?"

Of Free Will.

"The condition of man after the fall of Adam, is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good to faith and calling upon God, &c."

This doctrine has had a most pernicious influence upon society. It has driven many good men, who have been blessings to their fellow-creatures, into despair and wretchedness, by filling their minds with the awful apprehension that they have not had the supernatural grace of God acting upon their minds, and that they must therefore be in a state of perdition. O my readers! "be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." "He that doeth righteousness is righteous." And what is meant by this passage, "Seek and ye shall find, &c." and also the following—"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you; draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you?"

We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings.

How dangerous, absurd, and unscriptural is the notion that the virtues of Jesus Christ, and the sufferings he experienced, are efficacious in making us pleasing in the sight of God? If we can but come to that conclusion, it must be a matter of little consequence whether we are virtuous or wicked. I must again refer the reader to Wright's *Free Grace of God.* And shall content myself with merely quoting the following passages; "The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him; and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." "God will judge every man according to his deeds." "Every one of us shall give acconnt of himself to God." "For every man shall bear his own burden."

Of works done before Justification.

"Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his spirit, are not pleasant to God, &c."

The Churchman here professes the illiberal and unchristian notion, that the good works of the philosophers, and those of the

benevolent inhabitants of heathen lands, are not only inefficacious, but have also the nature of sin." "Of a truth I perceive," exclaimed Peter, "that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." This is the language of a preacher of the gospel, who was aided by the Holy Spirit, and who was sent on a special commission to a celebrated heathen. What therefore is more deserving of our confidence.

PURGATOR.

(To be continued.)

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN AND A QUAKER.

DIALOGUE VII.

(Continued from page, 185.)

C If you meddle not with society, what have you to do then with church-lands?

Q Nothing. What hast thou? They were robbed from the laity by the Popish Monks.—Art thou one? At the Reformation the laity resumed them again: and doth the church of Christ condemn the Reformation? Or, what hath she to do with the cheats and robberies of monks, but to condemn them?

C I hope you will allow us to keep what the law gives us.

Q But why claimest thou more? And hath not the law that gave, a power to take away?

C I dare say, you don't mean your own estate.

Q Yes surely, if I robbed the public to get it, or turned the bounty of the public to the public detriment.

C Have you the impudence to say that the clergy do so?

Q Friend, there are clergy who do so; who for their own pride and debaucheries starve the laity that feed their luxury; who receive all their power and revenues from the laity, and leave the laity none. And there are others who have great benefices for the exercise of religious functions, and never exercise any; but convert them into *sinecures*, or leave them to a hire-

ling. This, Friend, is worse than impudence, whereof I am not guilty. Does the spirit call them to this? For, if I am not deceived, you all declare yourselves called by the spirit.

C I know you are nibbling at our keeping curates, and yet you keep a baliff upon your estate.

Q Yes; and I will turn him out, if he neglect my affairs, or trust them to a carter. How dost thou like the example? It is of thy own choosing. And thou puttest the cure of precious souls, for which Christ died, upon the same foot with the care of corn and cattle, which men eat; and upon a worse foot, if thou wilt not suffer us to choose our spiritual bailiffs.

C And so you would have the same authority over clergymen, as over your ploughmen. Mighty civil!

Q We maintain both, but at very unequal wages. Where would be the incivility or injustice of laying out our own money for our own use!

C Then the church might starve for you?

Q Friend, thou mayest be learned, but thou art very ignorant. The church of Christ cannot starve, because it liveth not upon meats, and drink, and money.

C Nor consists of solemn faces, prim cravats, plain coats, and broad hats.

Q Thou speakest truth, notwithstanding thy intention.

C Then why are you singular in your habits?

Q Why art thou?

C I am a minister of the gospel.

Q Which never gave thee that tippet, nor that long and unhandy coat with many plaits.

C But it is decent.

Q My coat is more decent, and would become thee better. It is plain and warm, and hath no long train, nor vain superfluities.

C That solemn gate and mien too is very becoming.

Q Wouldest thou have me cut capers, and practise smiles?

C And be sure never alter the figure of that broad hat.

Q It is not broader than thine.

C I tell you I am a minister.

Q Thy hat is none, and I make no ministerial use of mine. I do not go to my neighbour, and say: Neighbour, I demand the tenth of thy substance, by virtue of this broad hat.

C Sir, who does?

Q Friend, thou art very passionate. I am only defending my hat, whereof I make no other use but to keep my head warm.

C Why don't you pull it off upon occasion?

Q I do upon proper occasion, that is, when I seek God.

C But never to man.

Q Therefore I do not, because I do it only to God. I think that the acts of worship, which we pay to God, ought not to be confounded with ceremonies of civility paid unto men. Thou bowest at the name of Jesus, dost thou bow also at the name of the King?

C But you are inconsistent with yourselves. Your style to God and man is the same, and you thee and thou them both alike.

Q We speak properly, to one God as one God, to one man as one man. Thou art more inconsistent with thyself. Thou reckonest thee and thou disrespectful to man; why uses tthou the same language to God?

C It is the scripture style.

Q To man as well as to God. Besides, Friend, let me tell thee, that the using the plural number to single persons, was begun in flattery to princes and great men; as was also the ceremony of the hat and the knee, and came to be practised as marks of adoration paid to men, who were thereby set up in God's stead: and where they cannot go that length, yet they feed natural pride, and make differences amongst men, where nature hath made none.

C We do not use them as marks of adoration.

Q I believe thee; but still they are marks of insincerity, and of a submission which is not due from man to man. Friend, these civil ceremonies are of evil efficacy, and apt to deceive the mind into a slavish and superstitious veneration for persons. They make unnatural distances in society, and set men too far above and below one another. By such steps Kings came to be

worshipped as Gods ; as several of the Roman Emperors formerly, and lately thy friend Louis was deified by many of thy French brethren.

(To be continued.)

UNITARIANISM IN AMERICA.

A New Unitarian Church in Boston.

We are happy to have the opportunity of informing our Readers, that another Congregation of Unitarian Christians has been raised in the United States of North America; another temple dedicated to the worship of the True God, the God and Father of us and of our Lord Jesus Christ; another minister added to the Unitarian Body, from the ranks of the Orthodox, among whom he was educated, and who for a time exercised his ministry in the orthodox episcopal church.

A careful attention to the sacred writers, and a serious review of his former sentiments, led Mr. Motte to abandon opinions, which he had before professed.

An interesting account of the operations of his mind is given in the preface to a sermon which Mr. Motte preached, July 1st, 1827, at Charleston S. C. to which the reader is referred. The Sermon has been reprinted in Liverpool ; it is entitled "Simplicity in the Christian Faith alike scriptural and powerful."

On the 21st of May 1828, Mr. Motte was installed as pastor of the South Unitarian Congregational Society in Boston, (Mass.) on which occasion an excellent Sermon was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Channing, of that place, several of whose sermons have delighted and instructed the English Reader.

This admirable Discourse being already republished in Liverpool, in a cheap form, so as to render it accessible to every class of readers, under the title "The great design of Christianity," we shall only on the present occasion, make a brief extract or two ; and pass on to notice the other services on the occasion.

The text is 2 Timothy i. 7.—and the Sermon commences with the following questions:

"WHY was Christianity given? Why did Christ seal it with his blood? Why is it to be preached? What is the great happiness it confers? What is the chief blessing for which it is to be prized? What is its pre-eminent glory, its first claim on the gratitude of mankind? These are great questions. I read the answer to them in the text. There I learn the great good which God confers through Jesus Christ. "He hath given us not the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." The glory of Christianity is, the pure and lofty action which it communicates to the human mind. It does not breathe a timid, abject spirit. If it did, it would deserve no praise. It gives power, energy, courage, constancy to the will; love, disinterestedness, enlarged affections to the heart; soundness, clearness, and vigour to the understanding. It rescues him who receives it from sin, from the sway of the passions; gives him the full and free use of his best powers; brings out and brightens the divine image in which he was created; and in this way not only bestows the promise, but the beginning of heaven. This is the excellence of Christianity."

After showing that the grand, the principal design of Christianity was to form an elevated character, to raise the mind to the heights of virtue, and of piety; the author, proceeds to point out some of those views of Christianity, which have a tendency to debase the human character, and to prevent the attainment of greatness and nobleness of soul; we select the following.

"Men's ignorance of the great truth stated in this discourse, is seen in the low ideas attached by multitudes to the word *salvation*. Ask multitudes what is the chief evil from which Christ came to save them, and they will tell you, "From hell, from penal fires, from future punishment." Accordingly they think, that salvation is something which another may achieve for them, very much as a neighbour may quench a conflagration that threatens their dwellings and lives. The word *hell*, which is used so seldom in the sacred pages, and which, as critics will tell you, does not occur once in the writings of Paul, and Peter, and John, which we meet only in four or five discourses of Je-

sus, and which all persons acquainted with Jewish geography, know to be a metaphor, a figure of speech, and not a literal expression, this word, by a perverted and exaggerated use, has done unspeakable injury to Christianity. It has possessed and diseased men's imaginations with outward tortures, shrieks, and flames; given them the idea of an outward ruin as what they have chiefly to dread; turned their thoughts to Jesus, as an outward deliverer; and thus blinded them to his true glory, which consists in his setting free and exalting the soul. Men are flying from an outward hell, when in truth they carry within them the hell which they should chiefly dread. The salvation which man chiefly needs, and that which brings with it all other deliverance, is salvation from the evil of his own mind. There is something far worse than outward punishment. It is sin; it is the state of a soul, which has revolted from God, and cast off its allegiance to conscience and the divine word; which renounces its Father.

"Another illustration of the error which I am labouring to expose, and which places the glory and importance of christianity in something besides its quickening influence on the soul, is afforded in the common apprehensions formed of heaven, and of the methods by which it may be obtained. Not a few, I suspect, conceive of heaven as a foreign good. It is a distant country, to which we are to be conveyed by an outward agency. How slowly do men learn, that heaven is the perfection of the mind, and that Christ gives it now just as far as he raises the mind to celestial truth and virtue. It is true, that this word is often used to express a future felicity; but the blessedness of the future world is only a continuance of what is begun here. There is but one true happiness, that of a mind unfolding its best powers, and attaching itself to great objects; and Christ gives heaven only in proportion as he gives this elevation of character. The disinterestedness, moral strength and filial piety of the christian, are not mere means of heaven, but heaven itself, and heaven now."

The charge to the minister was given by the Rev. Dr. Harris.

It was liberal, affectionate, and at the same time faithful. It concluded with the following expressions. "May the divine assistance attend your labours, give them efficacy, and crown them with success! And may the connection which you have now formed with this church and society be to you and to them, a cause of congratulation and joy through a long period of pleasant intimacy in this world, and in the renewed and perfected union of the world of life and blessedness eternal! Amen."

The Right Hand of Fellowship, a ceremony, we believe peculiar to our American christian brethren, was given by the Rev. C. W. Upham, attended with an address, full of affection, congratulation and the best wishes for the usefulness and happiness of the young minister.

The Address to the Society was delivered by the Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood, in which the congregation were reminded in a very honest and faithful manner of their duties. We have room for the following passage only.

"While I congratulate you most warmly, my friends, on the event of this connection, suffer me to say a few words concerning the duties on your part which it imposes.

"You will remember that it is a connection which multiplies mutual obligations, and that if the one party be bound, the other is not free. Indeed, this is all which I would desire you to remember, for in it is contained the whole of your duty. If you once fully acknowledge, and thoroughly understand the principle, your own good feeling and sense of justice will teach you its various applications. You expect, and very properly, that your minister should devote himself to your religious instruction and edification; that he should be diligent, patient, and candid. On your part then there should be a readiness to receive what you require him to impart, a perpetual attendance on the services and ordinances which he dispenses, and a patience and candour answering to those dispositions which you look for in him."

The following Hymns were composed for the occasion, and sung in the course of the Evening.

HYMN. I.

Written by Charles Sprague, Esq.

Thou lofty One! whose name is Love,
Whose praise all nations swell,
Bend from thy glorious throne above,
And in this temple dwell.

Father, 'tis thine—this sacred hour,
Thine let its spirit be;
And while each tongue proclaims thy power
O turn each heart to thee.

Bless *him*, thy servant—bid him here
Thy faithful shepherd stand,
To fold for thee through many a year,
This little gathering band.

Bless him with grace their steps to lead,
Where no dark tests divide,
To make the name of CHRIST their creed
His life and law their guide.

Bless *them*, thy children—them and theirs,
In all their ways below;
Be with them, Father, in their prayers,
And with them in their woe.

Be with them when they come to die,
And make the summons blest;
Then in a better world on high,
Receive them to thy rest.

HYMN II.

Written by the Rev. W. Pierpoint.

"Let there be light!"—when from on high,
O God, that first commandment came,
Forth leaped the Sun; and Earth, and Sky
Lay in his light, and felt his flame.

"Let there be light!"—The light of grace
And truth, a darkling world to bless,
Came with thy word, when on our race
Broke forth the Sun of Righteousness.

Light of our souls! how strong it grows!
That Sun, how wide his beams he flings,
As up the glorious sky he goes,
With light and healing in his wings.

Give us that light! O God 'tis given!
Hope sees it open heaven's wide halls
To those who for the truth have striven;
And Faith walks firmly where it falls.

Churches no more in cold eclipse,
Mourn the withholding of its rays;
It gilds their gates, and on the lips
Of every faithful preacher plays.

Doth not its circle clasp the brows
Of him who, in the strength of youth,
Gives himself up in this day's vows,
A minister of grace and truth?

Long may it, Lord;—nor let his soul
Go through death's gloomy vale alone;
But bear it on to its high goal,
Wrapt in the light that veils thy throne.

Ordination at New York.

Mr. Wm. Parsons Lunt was ordained as Pastor of the second Congregational Unitarian Church in this city, (corner of Prince and Mercer Streets,) on Thursday, the 19th June. The service commenced at 4 o'clock, P. M. Introductory prayer and reading the scriptures by Mr. Pierpont of Boston. Sermon by Mr. Greenwood of Boston. Ordaining prayer by Dr. Kendall of Plymouth. Charge by Mr. Forthingham of Boston. Right hand of fellowship and address to the Society by Mr. Ware of New York. Concluding prayer by Mr. Parkman of Boston. Benenediction by Mr. Lunt.

The sermon by Mr. Greenwood was an able production, clearly exhibiting the power and influence of Christianity in re-

forming the world, and its happy effects upon private and domestic life. The other performances were appropriate and interesting. Great harmony and unanimity attended all the proceedings of the day.

We congratulate the society on the settlement of a young man of such promising talents and usefulness, in this great metropolis of our country, and humbly hope and most fervently pray to our heavenly Father, that the union which has been formed may be attended with the blessing of God, and productive of the happiest effect.

Gospel Luminary.

American Unitarian Association, (Boston.)

The third anniversary of this important Association, was celebrated at the Church in Federal Street, on the evening of June 10th. The friends of the cause, in the promotion of which this Society is now engaged, have been greatly cheered and encouraged by the intelligence received from different sections of the country, in relation to the progress of liberal principles, and by the zeal and animation with which many of the leading men of our community have espoused and lent their aid to the support of these principles. The Church where the Association assembled on this occasion was literally thronged with ladies and gentlemen, many of whom were from distant parts of the Commonwealth. The meeting was opened by prayer offered by Dr. Porter, of Roxbury.

After prayer, the Secretary of the Association, Ezra S. Gannett, read the Annual Report of the Executive Committee. The purposes for which the Association was formed, are the "diffusion of religious truth, and the increase of true religion." The Report, on this occasion, noticed briefly those circumstances which are thought to be peculiarly interesting through their connection with these purposes. These circumstances were, among others, the publication of tracts; the labors of missionaries; the maintaining an extensive correspondence; the formation of auxiliary societies; the formation of a library; the expressions of sympathy by Unitarians of foreign countries; the

formation of a society for the gratuitous distribution of books and tracts; and also of a Sunday School Society, and the establishment of new periodical publications.

The Report concluded with an eloquent and affecting allusion to the dispensations of Providence in the removal by death, of two able and distinguished supporters of the principles of Unitarian Christianity and Christian liberty, the late Robert Little of Washington, and Judge Howe of Northampton.

The President, Dr. Bancroft, of Worcester, called Dr. Channing, who rose and spoke for some minutes with great animation and eloquence, on the encouraging circumstances connected with the progress of Unitarian Christianity. These circumstances are, the place where, and the character of the people among whom, the spirit of free inquiry and of independent thinking first burst forth. He said it not boastingly, but with gratitude, it was in the most enlightened portion of the most enlightened country of the world; a place which, by its ardent love of freedom, had gained the honourable appellation of the "Cradle of Civil Liberty," and which well deserves the name of the Cradle of Religious Liberty.

It was an encouraging circumstance also, that these principles have been carried forward by the most gentle, pacific and honourable means: by dispassionate addresses to the understandings of a thinking and intellectual people; by reason, and fair argument, and cool reflection; not by the authority of the civil arm, on the terrors of the Inquisition.

The meeting was closed by a hymn, sung by the whole assembly standing.

The patient and apparently delighted attention given by the large assembly of ladies and gentlemen convened on the occasion, gives encouraging proof of the sympathy that is felt by an intelligent and religious community, in the success and progress of this important Institution.

Gospel Luminary,

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE BEAVER.

(Concluded from page, 183.)

THERE are some Beavers called terriers, who make their abode in caverns dug in a rising ground, either on the shore, or at some distance from the water, to which they scoop out subterranean trenches from their cavern, which descend from ten to an hundred feet in depth. These trenches furnish them with retreats, situated at unequal heights, and wherein they enjoy a shelter from the water when it ascends. Their beds are made of chips, which serve them instead of a quilt, and of grass, which accommodates them in the nature of a feather-bed.

All these works, especially in the cold regions, are compleated in August or September, after which period they furnish themselves with provisions. During the summer season, they regale themselves with all the fruits and plants the country produces. In the winter, they eat the wood of the ash, the plane, and other trees, which they steep in water, in quantities proportionable to their necessary consumption; and they are supplied with a double stomach, to facilitate the digestion of such a solid food, at two operations. They cut twigs, from three to six fit feet in length; the large ones are conveyed, by several Beavers, to the magazine, and the smaller by a single animal; but they take different ways. Each individual has his walk assigned him, to prevent the labourers from being interrupted by their mutual occasions. The dimensions of their pile of timber are regulated in proportion to the number of the inhabitants; and it has been observed, that the provision of wood for ten Beavers, comprehended thirty feet in a square surface, and ten in thickness. These parcels of wood are not piled up in one continued heap, but laid across one another, with interstices between them, that they may the better draw out what quantity they want, and always take the parcel at the bottom, which lies in the water. They cut this wood into small particles, and con-

vey it to their cells, where the whole family come to receive their particular share. Sometimes they expatiate in the woods, and regale their young with a new collation. The hunters, who are sensible these creatures love green wood better than old, place a parcel of the former about their lodge, and then have several devices to ensnare them. When the winter grows severe, they sometimes break the ice, and when the Beavers come to the opening, for the benefit of fresh air, they kill them with hatchets; or make a large aperture in the ice, and cover it with a strong net, and then overturn the lodge; upon which the Beavers, who think to escape in their usual way, by flying to the water, and emerging at the hole in the ice, fall into the snare, and are taken.

Obituary.

June 18, at *Ainslie Place*, in *Scotland*, DUGALD STEWARD, Esq., late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, leaving a name respected throughout the civilized world for fine talents usefully employed, and for public and private virtue. He was the friend and ornament of his species, and few philosophers have done more for the improvement of mankind. It is his least praise that he was an elegant and beautiful writer. To him is owing the more liberal spirit that now pervades our northern schools. He possessed in an eminent degree, and by the mild influence of his character he diffused amongst his pupils and associates, the love of rational liberty. Scotland, rich in her biography, boasts of no purer or better name. *Christian Reformer.*

July 21, at the Palace at *Lambeth*, DR. SUTTON, Archbishop of Canterbury. With the exception of the Roman Catholic question, the Archbishop was a decided friend to all the measures proposed in his day for the relief of conscience. The Dissenters have been indebted to him for his conciliatory and liberal conduct on several occasions, and particularly on Lord Sidmouth's

abortive bill and the recent abolition of the Sacramental Test. One denomination of the Dissenters, the Unitarians, must ever remember the part he took with regard to them with gratitude and respect; he mainly contributed to the success of the measure brought forward by Mr. Smith for abolishiug the penal statutes against the impugners of the doctrine of the Trinity; and he was from first to last decidedly friendly to the Unitarian Marriage Bill.—His Grace was no favourer of the Evangelical party in the Church, and is said to have opposed strenuously the elevation of Dr. Ryder, the brother of Lord Harrowby, now Bishop of Litchfield. He married early in life a lady of the name of Thornton, by whom he had a numerous family. The present Speaker of the House of Commons is his eldest son, and one of his daughters is the lady of Dr. Percy, late Dean of Canterbury, now Bishop of Carlisle. Another daughter is the wife of the Rev. Charles Croft, Archdeacon of Canterbury. We know not that his Grace was an author, even in his immediate profession. He spoke rarely in Parliament, and only on subjects connected with the Church: his speeches were short, but happily expressed and impressively delivered. Of late years, when age gave to his fine form and sonorous voice peculiar dignity, he admirably sustained in the House of Lords the character of the Father of his Church. *ibid.*

At George Town, Dis. Columbia, U. S., N. America, in the 63rd year of his age, on July 11th, died Mr. John Wright, formerly of Liverpool, he was the principle means of establishing a Debating Society, which was formed of several hundred members, and to put down which, and similar societies, was the object of the celebrated six acts of Lord Sidmouth.

In the year 1817, Mr. Wright, who was in the habit of delivering occasional discourses on religious subjects, was prosecuted by the magistracy on the double charge of holding religious meetings in an unregistered place, and for delivering sentiments of a blasphemous nature. Both these charges could not be true; for religion and blasphemy are opposed to each, as much as light and darkness. On the first charge the penalty of *sixty pounds* had been incurred. The defendant had every reason to believe the place was regularly registered, as it had been used without interruption, as a place of worship for six months together by different parties, but through the carelessness of the officer, who, it appeared had kept his notices on these subjects on a file

only, instead of recording them in a book, the entry could not be found, the magistrates therefore convicted the defendant. Against this conviction an appeal was made to the Quarter Sessions, when the conviction of the magistrates was confirmed. During the discussion of this business, the worthy Recorder observed that *Dissent* was a *crime in the eye of the law;* and that an angel from heaven could not legally preach in a place, not properly registered!!! It would be unjust not to state, that, although the conviction was confirmed, the magistrates did not exact the fines.

But on the charge of Blasphemy Mr. W. was obliged to find bail to a very heavy amount for a person in his circumstances, but he had no difficulty in obtaining it. The Blasphemy with which the defendant was charged rested on two points chiefly, viz. the doctrine of the atonement, and that of an intermediate state of conscious existence between death and the resurrection. The informer in this honorable work was one *John Scott*, then a Merchant of Liverpool, who is said to have corresponded with Dr. Law, the then Bishop of Chester. As it is supposed, the Bishop, fearing that his Rev. Father who had propagated similar sentiments, would be summoned into the court at Lancaster, was the means of putting a stop to the prosecution.

In September of that year Mr. W. with his family emigrated to America: and for sometime was in the habit of preaching in Washington, and once preached by invitation before Congress in their Hall of Assembly.

His death was occasioned by a paralytic affection, increased, if not occasioned, by too great an exposure to the heat of the sun during the month of June, by working in his garden during the middle of the day.

He has left a widow, one son, and two daughters. He had to struggle through many difficulties in life. His perseverance was of no common kind. His philanthropy knew no bounds: in his breast bigotry had no dwelling place.—His toils are over, his labor is finished.—He rests in the silent tomb; where he will sleep till the voice of heaven's messenger shall usher in the morn of the resurrection; then shall he stand in his lot.

He was the Author of the following works:—The Right of Free Discussion claimed and exercised. pp. 60, 8vo.—The claims of Misery or Benevolence its own reward; a Sermon in behalf of distressed Seamen. pp. 16. 8vo.—A Defence of the Jewish People, a Letter to Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool. pp. 64, 8vo.—Three Discourses on the Right of Private Judgement, and the exercise of Reason in Matters of Religion. pp. 68, 8vo.—A Sermon, generally known by the name of Wright's Blasphemy Sermon; pp. 28, 8vo.—This was the occasion of the prosecution.—American Unitarian Controversy; containing the Author's defence of the Unitarian Doctrines. pp. 109. 8vo.—A Refutation of the Sophisms, Gross Misrepresentations, &c. contained in an American's Letter to the Edinburgh Reviewers. on Slavery. pp. 52, 8vo.—The Character of Jesus as a Saviour, a Sermon preached before Congress.—The three last were published in America—The A. U. Controversy, is republished in Liverpool.

INTELLIGENCE.

The Anniversary of the Western Unitarian Association, &c.

THE anniversary meeting, of the Western Unitarian Society "for the promotion of Christian knowledge and the practice of virtue, by the distribution of books," was held at Yeovil, on Wednesday, 16th July, the Rev. Hugh Hutton, of Birmingham, preached in the morning from 2 Cor. x. 7. the Rev. Mr. Turner, late of York, introducing the service, and the Rev. Mr. Davis, of Evesham, giving the long prayer. After the morning service the business of the society was transacted in the chapel, when several new members were added. The next anniversary was appointed to be held at Bristol, in July, 1829. An excellent and economical dinner was provided at one of the Inns of the Town, Isaac Davy, Esq. of Crediton, in the chair, to which, about fifty friends sat down, eighteen being ministers. Amongst the company were persons from London, Bristol, Birmingham, Glasgow, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Evesham, Taunton, Bridport, Bridgewater, Trowbridge, Crediton, Dorchester, Honiton, Ilminster, Crewkerne, Hinton, &c. Many admirable speeches suitable to the occasion were delivered; and most interesting information was given to the meeting, of the progress of improvement and of liberal sentiments, in France, by Dr. Carpenter—of the spread of Unitarian Christianity, in the North of Ireland, by the Rev. Hugh Hutton, and of the progress of similar sentiments, in Scotland, by the Rev. G. Harris, of Glasgow. Much of the good effected in Ireland and Scotland was attributed to the free circulation of the books of this, and of other societies established by the Unitarians in various parts of England. The meeting was altogether a truly delightful and edifying one: being converted, as we hope, to the truth as it is in Jesus, the brethren endeavored to strengthen each other. In the evening, the society, was highly gratified by a sermon from Dr. Carpenter, founded on 1 Peter iv. 11. the service being introduced by the Rev. G. Harris. Previously to naming the text, Dr. Carpenter took occasion to contradict the report which had been so industriously circulated in the West of England, of his change of sen-

timents, and avowed his firm and increasing conviction of the truth of Unitarian Christianity. On Thursday evening the Rev. George Harris preached. On Friday evening the Rev. R. Cree preached. On Sunday morning 20th, the Rev. Russell Scott, of Portsmouth preached; and on the evening of the same day, the Rev. W. Hughes, of the Isle of Wight. The several services were attended by numerous and deeply attentive audiences. May the blessing of God attend the springing of the seed thus sown, that it may bring forth much good fruit.

Pastoral Charges.

THE Rev. Dr. CARPENTER, who resigned his pastoral charge at Bristol, on account of health, is invited by his congregation to return to the pulpit.

The Rev. JAMES GILCHRIST has retired from *Newington Green*, where he preached in the morning, and from *Worship Street*, where he preached in the afternoon. The Rev. Dr. PHILIPPS, of Sheffield, is invited to Newington Green. Mr. D. EATON has been chosen at Worship Street, by the afternoon General Baptist congregation, as their pastor, and has accepted the appointment.

Non-Conforming Methodists.

WE are requested to state, that the Conference not having redressed the grievances of the Non-Conforming Methodists in this Town, but confirmed those measures which were considered arbitrary and unchristian, they intend to continue a distinct body, and that they will shortly invite their friends in different parts of the kingdom to meet them, to take into consideration the best means of promoting general co-operation.

Leeds Mercury.

Early fruits of the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Act.

AT Leicester Castle, lately, JOSEPH GRUNDY, Esq. of the Oaks, qualified as a Magistrate and Deputy Lieutenant of that County. Being a Protestant Dissenter, Mr Grundy subscribed the Declaration lately passed, in lieu of taking the Sacrament at the Established Church as previously required.

Stamford Mercury, July 25th, 1828.

SELECTED POETRY.

THE EXILE AT REST.

BY MR. JOHN PIERPONT.

His Falchion flash'd along the Nile;
His hosts he led through Alpine snows;
O'er Moscow's towers that blaz'd the while,
His eagle flag unfurl'd—and froze.

Here sleeps he now alone!—not one
Of all the kings whose crowns he gave,
Bends o'er the dust,—nor wife nor son
Has ever seen or sought his grave.

Behind this sea-girt rock, the star
That led him on from crown to crown
Has sunk;—and nations from afar
Gaz'd as it faded and went down.

High is his couch;—the ocean flood
Far, far below, by storm is curl'd:
As round him heav'd, while high he stood,
A stormy and unstable world.

Alone he sleeps!—the mountain cloud,
That night hangs round him and the breath
Of morning scatters, is the shroud
That wraps the conqueror's clay in death.

Pause here! the far-off world at last
Breathes free; the hand that shook its thrones,
And to the earth its mitres cast,
Lies powerless now beneath these stones.

Hark! comes there, from the pyramids,
And from Siberian wastes of snow,
And Europe's hills, a voice that bids
The world he awed to mourn him?—No;

The only, the perpetual dirge
That's heard here, is the sea-bird's cry—
The mournful murmur of the surge—
The cloud's deep voice—the world's low sigh.

Gospel Luminary.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We shall be glad to receive our friend *Philo James'* further communication.

Philalethes in our next.

To the inquirers after Dr. Channing's works, we can say that the volume is pretty far advanced in the press, and will appear soon—its contents will be increased by some pieces lately arrived from America.

ERRATUM.—In our last Number p. 191, twelve lines from the bottom, for "al-the thought," read "although the."

F. B. Wright, Printer, Liverpool.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—Jesus.

No 46, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d* OCTOBER 1, 1828.

POPULAR RELIGIOUS ERRORS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

Sir,

As my last letter was written expressly to rectify what I conceive to be an erroneous opinion, respecting Adam's fall from innocence, I shall now take the liberty, to make a few remarks on certain popular arguments, which are so ingeniously used by some of our Orthodox brethren, as even to give a degree of plausibility to errors of the most unscriptural and contradictory nature.

The particular argument which I now intend to notice, is pompously brought forward by Trinitarians, to establish the doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine which declares that the *child* Jesus was the everlasting and unchangeable Jehovah. When a rational christian objects to this irrational and incomprehensible dogma, our Trinitarian opponents ask us, whether we can comprehend how a blade of grass grows, or by what principle a beautiful bed of flowers springs from a shapeless mass of earth and water; to which we readily answer, no; and then they triumphantly exclaim we have no more right to reject the doctrine of the Trinity, because we cannot comprehend it, than we have to deny the growth of a blade of grass or a bed of tulips, for we admit this vegetable process to be a matter of fact, though its principles are beyond our comprehension. In opposition to this ingenious piece of sophistry, we have to state, that our chief objection to the Trinity is not owing to its incomprehensibility;

but it is on account of the absurd and contradictory conclusions to which it naturally leads, that we are so strongly opposed to its pretentions. To prove the absurd and contradictory tendency of this doctrine, let us refer to the unadulterated scriptures of truth, and we shall find that they declare in the most plain and unequivocal manner, that the glory and brightness of the everlasting and unchangeable God is too bright even for angels to behold, and yet these very Trinitarians, who say they take the scriptures for their guide, hesitate not to assert that the child Jesus, who had nothing about him that even attracted the notice of his friends, more than other children, was the very God, whose glory fills the universe, and whose unchangeable brightness exceeds all description; and when the evident absurdity of this conclusion is pointed out to them, they say, it is a mystery beyond our feeble powers of comprehension, and as we rational christians allow, that the vegetable progress is a matter of fact which we do not comprehend, but which we admit to be true, we ought by the same rule to allow the truth of their favourite doctrine, though it may seem a mystery, completely beyond our comprehension.

As the greater part of mankind have neither leisure nor sufficient inclination, to separate the sophistical arguments, which are too often blended with the plain truths of the gospel, I shall endeavour to shew, that this view which is generally taken of the vegetable kingdom, in order to support the Trinity, cannot be brought forward as an illustrative argument in favour of that doctrine, as the case bears little or no analogy to the question. In order to render this vegetable illustration more analogous to the doctrine and principles on which the Trinity is founded, let us suppose, that a Trinitarian brother is presenting to our view a beautiful bed of tulips, and that he points out one tulip which has escaped our particular notice, and tells us that this tulip, which to all appearance is only a tulip, possesses an intellectual power, equal to the immortal Newton; we should not conclude from this statement, that such a circumstance like the Trinity was a mysterious fact, beyond our comprehension; but

rather conclude that our frail brother was beside himself as such a statement would not only be incomprehensible but contrary to all the rules of sound reason and practical experience; yet, absurd and irrational as this statement of our Trinitarian brother may appear, still it bears the strongest analogy to the views which most orthodox writers entertain respecting the Trinity; for they contend that when Jesus was a child, and subject to infantile feebleness, like other children, that he was equal, at this very time, to the everlasting and omnipotent God, whose unchangeable brightness and glory is too great even for angels to behold. And to insure an implicit belief in this extraordinary doctrine, its teachers have persuaded their hearers, that it is a vital mystery, which must neither be disputed nor rejected. Had not the prophetic spirit of inspiration directed the kinsfolk of Jesus, to look upon him as the appointed Messiah, they would not in all probability have discovered, that this child was he who was to come, until he had commenced his ministry, when the spirit of God descended upon him in the form of a dove, and shewed, by evidence not to be disputed, that he was the appointed Saviour of the world.*

Impressed with sentiments like these

I remain yours,

PHILO JAMES.

Wavertree, September 13th, 1828.

QUESTION.

TYRO will be obliged to any of your learned correspondents to inform him why the wicked are compared to GOATS (Matt. xxv.) and rejected, when under the law they were as clean animals as SHEEP?

---

* Did any one of his kinsfolk or acquaintance entertain the idea, that the CHILD Jesus, was to be the appointed Messiah? John who in all probability, was the playfellow of Jesus, and acquainted with him after the years of childhood had passed, says, "I knew him not, but he who sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he, which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit."—*Editor.*

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN AND A QUAKER.

DIALOGUE VIII.

(Concluded from page, 210.)

C Does the light within teach you to know every thing?

Q My natural light, which thou callest reason, sufficeth to confute thee. The other light seemeth to be withheld from thee, and therefore thou mockest it; it better becomes a christian to pray for it.

C You are an impudent man. Is it from your inward light that you reproach me, as if I were not a christian?

Q Thou art very tender. I do not reproach thee with any such thing; but I am sure that christianity teacheth no man to deny the inward light, and to wax angry and revile.

C I do not deny that there is such a thing as the light of the spirit, but I deny that you have it.

Q Thy censure is rash. How knowest thou what is within me?

C By what comes out of you.

Q I judge not of thee by the same rule; I hope thou hast charity, though I see it not. But I will abide by thy rule in relation to myself. What hast thou heard me utter but the words of truth and soberness?

C Not a word of the spirit, I am sure.

Q Knowest thou him? If thou dost, thou must know that he is the author of truth.

C But not of sauciness and schism.

Q True, Doctor; and therefore the quakers do not saucily insult, nor uncharitably damn all those, or any of those who differ from them. That is the only antichristian schism, which damneth all men as schismatics, except its own cruel club.

C A smart casuist, I'll assure you, to vindicate the quakers from schism!

Q I wish thou couldst vindicate thyself as well upon the same pious and benevolent principle.

C What, do you charge the established church with schism?

Q God forbid: I only wish thee, and such as are like thee, a more peaceable and more merciful spirit. Thou art not the established church.

C And dare you say that the quakers are not schismatics?

Q Yes, certainly; I think that all good men, of all professions, will be saved. This is charity; I separate from no church out of pride or interest, and am therefore no schismatic.

C And herein, I suppose, the spirit is your voucher.

Q I desire no other, and can have no other for the thoughts of my heart.

C For which we are to take your word, for I think you never take oaths.

Q The scripture forbiddeth us to swear at all.

C It forbids profane cursing and swearing.

Q Doctor, it forbids all swearing.

C But the solemnity of an oath in the presence of God is an act of religion.

Q All speaking is in the presence of God, and speaking the truth is an act of religion. When we are called upon to give our testimony to the truth, we never refuse it.

C I should be sorry to have my property depend upon your affirmation.

Q If I am a good man, thou needest not distrust me; if I am a bad man, my oath will not secure thee.

C I believe, indeed, the affirmation and oath of a quaker are much alike.

Q They ought to be alike amongst all christians, and all moral men; and therefore let thy meaning be ever so bitter, thou givest an honourable testimony to friends. I hope thou findest the same faithfulness and sincerity amongst thine. Is not the word of a churchman as good as his oath?

C I hope better than a quaker's, at least.

Q Not if a quaker speaketh the truth.

C That *if* was well put in.

Q Be it so; though thou mightest have spared thy reproach,

by which thou wilt gain nothing. None of us have been accused of false evidence, and doubtless thou hast heard of many churchmen punished with public infamy for perjury.

C I suppose you do the thing more slyly.

Q I thank thee for allowing us to have more discretion than thy disciples: if they have, at least, as few restraints, and more folly than we have, how are they bettered by thy teaching? and how is their oath better than our affirmation?

C I cannot answer for profligates.

Q Nor oughtest thou to suspect us for profligates without cause.

C I must beg leave not to value a quaker's affirmation so much as a churchman's oath.

Q I will value it as much without leave. Friend, are thy brethren more loyal by taking oaths, than men of our persuasion are without taking any?

C I'll take my oath that thou art a saucy fellow

Q I am not so the more for that.—But is that thy best answer? I could easily have given thee the same, had it been suitable to good manners.

C Manners! O my sides! Why you are the most unmannerly of all sects; so unmannerly, that there is no living with you; and all that do, despise you.

Q Friend, I in particular have given thee no cause for thy accusation, nor for thy contempt; and what thou sayest of us in general, thou sayest passionately, and it comes from prejudice, or ill information. In Pensylvania, where we have the power, we do not molest nor revile any man of any religion; and thou thyself, for all thy intemperate spirit, mightest live there with full freedom.

C I live amongst you! I live amongst fanatics!

Q I do not invite thee. There are no tithes there to allure, but there are Indians to convert. How likest thou the employment, and the terms thereof?

C Sir, I have no call there; I have employment in my own parish.

Q I hope thou hadst a call thither.

C Yes, Mr. Pert, to preserve peace and religious order; though you are an enemy to all order.

Q Thou hast not a more orderly man in thy parish; and many of thy flock are very disorderly, especially upon holidays, which, I think, are part of your order, and celebrated with drunkenness, and with breaking my windows.

C Did I exhort them to it?

Q No: thou didst only paint out quakers to them, as a people not fit to live amongst christians.

C I preached what I thought it my duty to preach.

Q And they practised what they thought thou hadst taught them to practise.

C If you would wisely remove to Pensylvania, you might live there with freedom, you know.

Q So I would, if my affairs would let me: as I might here, under the protection of the law, if thou wouldest let me. Let me tell thee, friend, for the credit of the quakers government in Pensylvania, there is not a more thriving colony in America. They encourage and protect all men, and persecute none: they are friendly to the savage Indians, who come freely into their houses by day, and by night; and any man in a quaker's habit may traval safely and singly through all the nations of North America, who will be ready to receive and assist him.

C The quakers are obliged to live peaceably with their neighbours: you know they must not fight.

Q Knowest thou any better way to avoid fighting, than a peaceable spirit? And ought not all men to avoid fighting? The quakers, since their first establishment there, have had no wars; it is not so in New England, where men, like thee, are for spiritual dominion, and trust to the sword. There they use the poor natives ill, who therefore make frequent incursions upon them. Men who will take away by violence the lands and goods of others, and domineer over them, must fight to defend what they do. The quakers have hurt no man, and no man offers to hurt them.

C Commend me to their human prudence! The quakers will make no man their enemy by their zeal for christianity.

Q Friend, thy abuse ends in praise. The quakers use no man as an enemy for his religion; and they who do, have not zeal, but fury and fanaticism. Our Saviour and his apostles had no such zeal. Ill usage, fierceness, and barbarity, convince no man; nor is any man made a christian by rage and power.

C It would be great pity that such as you should make any. A pagan converted into a quaker, makes but a sorry exchange.

Q Those words would fit the mouth of a pagan better than thine; and a quaker is better qualified to reason with a pagan, than thou art. We have nothing to desire of him but to be a christian, and we gain neither money nor authority by his conversion. But with what face can such as thou art tell a nation of heathens: "Gentlemen, be of my religion, and in requital I will be your lord and master, and take the tenth of all you have, and all else that I can get; none of which can ever return to you again, let me use, or abuse you how I will." And yet can men of thy spirit and pretensions reason in sincerity at any other rate with any set of men in the world?

C The man raves.—Can people pay too much for their souls?

Q They ought to pay nothing; the blood of Christ is already paid. Is not that sufficient? And dost thou really confess that thou wouldst not save souls without payment?

C I will bear no more.—This is audacious beyond human patience.

Q Doctor, nothing is beyond christian patience.

C Too much liberty makes you insolent.—We shall find some other way of confuting you.

Q Thou meanest force, which is the champion of bad reasoning, and a bad cause.

C Hold your tongue, prater.

Q I have liberty of speech from Christ and the law.—Wouldst thou restrain it by thy breath?

C It is a pity thy breath were not restrained.

Q Friend, may God of his mercy forgive thee.—Farewell.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUE CROSS OF CHRIST

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

The Catholics are reproached by the Protestants for their rigid adherance to relics, and for the estimation in which they hold such sacred things. And I must observe to you, that I have often wondered at the levity with which you have treated such subjects, thus disregarding the opinion of the church, which, an inspired Apostle has said, "is the pillar and ground of truth:" and which even the Blessed Virgin's Son, who was himself God, has told us, that if a man will not hear, he is to be regarded as an heathen or a publican, we are not to associate with such an one.

It has been said that the real and true cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified, was never discovered since the church of Christ was legally established, under Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ at Rome. Some men are indeed so excessively incredulous that an angel from heaven, or one who has long been a tenant of the tomb on revisiting this earth, would not be able to convince them. It is not the attention of such men that I solicit, but those of better minds, men who have not cast off their reverence for the authority of the Holy Church Apostolic. And who will not reject the testimony of history, although the facts be either mysterious or miraculous.

St. Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, was a very pious and devout woman; this must be allowed by all, for the church has canonized her. She being a favourite of the Holy Virgin Mother of God, was assisted by her in the discovery of the real cross of Christ.

The Pagans endeavored to abolish the memory of the resurrection of Jesus Christ; they had heaped a great quantity of rubbish upon the grotto of the holy sepulchre, paved it with stones above, and built a temple to Venus, where they offered sacrifice to this Idol, to the end that the Christians might seem

to adore her when they come to this place to worship Jesus Christ.

On this spot, the Emperor determined to build a magnificent church, one that should surpass all other churches then in existence. He left the direction of this work to his pious mother, then eighty years of age, in which she engaged with all the ardor of youth; no doubt invigorated and assisted by the Blessed Virgin.

She set out on her journey, visiting many holy places. When she arrived at Jerusalem her first care was to cause the temple and idol of Venus to be destroyed, which profaned the place where the cross stood, and where Christ rose from the dead. The rubbish was taken away, and the workmen dug so deep that they discovered the Holy Sepulchre, and near it they found three crosses buried in the earth. It could not be known which was that of our Saviour, until the Bishop St. Macarius, thought of the following means of discovering it.

He caused the crosses to be carried to the house of a lady of quality who had been long sick, and reduced to the utmost extremity; while prayers were said, each of the crosses was applied to her, and as soon as she had touched the last, she was entirely cured.

With the cross was found the inscription also, but separated from it, as also the nails. The latter St. Helena sent to her son, with a considerable part of the cross, leaving the other in Jerusalem. She caused it to be put in a silver frame, and gave it to the bishop to keep that it might be preserved to posterity. In the following age, indeed it was exposed only once a year at the solemnity of Easter, that is on Good Friday, the bishop having first adored it, exposed it to the adoration of all the people; and from thence the continuation of this ceremony, in our church, undoubtedly proceeds. Upon this day only the true cross was shown at Jerusalem, excepting by the particular favor of the bishop to pious persons who made a pilgrimage on purpose. As for the nails Constantine caused part of them to be put in his helmet, and part on the bit of his horse's brible, making use of them as a safeguard in battle.

This is the account which ecclesiastical historians have given us of this sacred affair. By referring to Fleury's Ecc. Hist. of the 4th century the ancient authorities may be found.

And now, Sir, I appeal to you, and the most judicious part of your readers, whether the Catholic, has not as sufficient proof of the real existence of the true cross of Christ, and that this cross is still in possession of the church of Rome, as the Protestants have of the holy incarnation, the two natures of our blessed Lord, his real and proper divinity, and of the trinity in unity, all which sacred and sublime doctrines they derived from our church, for separate them from the authority of the church and on what will they be found to stand? Where will you find the evidences and proofs of these sublime mysteries? Why then reproach that church, to which they are under so many obligations, with superstition, because we adore the cross on which the salvation of all true believers was accomplished.

I trust to your liberality for the insertion of this and am, Sir, yours,

A CATHOLIC.

ON POWER AND GREATNESS.

POWER not only intoxicates its possessor; rank and greatness not only lifts the puny mortal beyond the sphere of humanity; but the effects of power and greatness, where they are loved for the possession only, are baneful to the happiness of the great body of the people to no common extent. This is strikingly shown in the following extract.

"We have aimed to show the guilt of the love of power and dominion, by showing the ruin which it brings on the mind, by enlarging on the preciousness of that inward freedom which it invades and destroys. To us, this view is the most impressive; but the guilt of this passion may also be discerned, and by some more clearly, in its outward influences; in the desolation, bloodshed, and woe, of which it is the perpetual cause. We owe it

almost all the miseries of war. To spread the sway of one or a few, thousands and millions have been turned into machines under the name of soldiers, armed with instruments of destruction, and then sent to reduce others to their own lot by fear and pain, by fire and sword, by butchery and pillage. And is it light guilt, to array man against his brother; to make murder the trade of thousands; to drench the earth with human blood; to turn it into a desert; to scatter families like chaff; to make mothers widows, and children orphans; and to do all this for the purpose of spreading a still gloomier desolation, for the purpose of subjugating men's souls, turning them into base parasites, extorting from them a degrading homage, humbling them in their own eyes, and breaking them to servility as the chief duty of life? When the passion for power succeeds, as it generally has done, in establishing despotism, it seems to make even civilization a doubtful good. Whilst the monarch and his court are abandoned to a wasteful luxury, the peasantry, rooted to the soil and doomed to a perpetual round of labors, are raised but little above the brute. There are parts of Europe, christian Europe, in which the peasant, through whose sweat kings and nobles riot in plenty, seems to enjoy less, on the whole, than the untamed Indian of our forests. Chained to one spot, living on the cheapest vegetables, sometimes unable to buy salt to season his coarse fare, seldom or never tasting animal food, having for their shelter a mud walled hut floored with earth or stone, and subjected equally with the brute to the rule of a superior, he seems to us to partake less of animal, intellectual, and moral pleasures, than the free wanderer of the woods, whose steps no man fetters; whose wigwam no tyrant violates; whose chief toil is hunting, that noblest of sports; who feasts on the deer, that most luxurious of viands; to whom streams, as well as woods, pay tribute; whose adventurous life gives sagacity; and in whom peril nourishes courage and self command. We are no advocates for savage life. We know that its boasted freedom is a delusion. The single fact that human nature in this wild state makes no progress, is proof enough that it wants true liberty. We mean

only to say that man in the hands of despotism is sometimes degraded below the savage; that it were better for him to be lawless, than to live under lawless sway."

Dr. Channing.

PLAGIARISM CHARGED AGAINST THE REV. DR. ADAM CLARKE.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

Having occasion lately to consult LOWTH, on a very obscure and ambiguous passage in Isaiah xlviii. 16. "And now the Lord God and his spirit hath sent me." I found a passage quoted by him from Orig. cont. Cels. Lib. 1. in Greek, which Lowth has rendered in English as follows.

"Who is it, that saith in Isaiah, And now the Lord hath sent me and his spirit? in which, as the expression is ambiguous, is it the Father and the Holy Spirit who have sent Jesus: or the Father, who hath sent both Christ and the Holy Spirit? The latter is the true interpretation." On which Dr. Lowth remarks, "I have kept to the order of the words of the original, on purpose that the ambiguity, which Origin remarks in the version of lxx, and which is the same in the Hebrew, might still remain, and the sense, which he gives to it, be offered to the reader's judgment; which is wholly excluded in our vulgar Translation.

After consulting Lowth, I looked into Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary, when to my surprise I found the above passage quoted throughout, Greek and all, *verbatim et literatim;* even the concluding words, "I have kept to the order, &c." Not the least acknowledgement is made by the learned Dr. from what author he extracted the passage.

This fact I think ought to be known as the Doctor is so often quoted as an authority, almost equal to the scriptures them-

selves, on any controverted religious subject.—Now I suspect this is not a solitary instance; and if so, how are we to know what is Dr. Clarke's, and what is not? Those who read him almost exclusively, and there are many who do, will of course attribute all the good things to be found in his work, to him as the author. But is it just in Dr. Clarke thus to deceive his readers? An acknowledgement was certainly due to Lowth, and it was a breach of the eighth precept to omit it.

I am, yours,

PHILALETHES.

ILLULTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

The Wedding Garment.—Matt. xxii. 11.

EASTERN marriages were celebrated with great splendour and festivity. Those that were invited to the marriage, were expected to appear in their best and gayest attire. If the bridegroom was in circumstances to afford it, wedding garments were prepared for all the guests, which were hung up in the antichamber for them to put on over the rest of their clothes, as they entered the apartments where the marriage-feast was prepared. To refuse, or even to neglect putting on the wedding garment, was reckoned an insult to the bridegoom, aggravated by the circumstance that it was provided by himself for the very purpose of being worn on that occasion, and was hung up in the way to the inner apartment, that the guests must have seen it, and recollected the design of its suspension. This accounts for the severity of the sentence pronounced by the king, who came in to see the guests, and found among them one who had neglected to put it one; "And he saith unto him, friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless," because it was provided at the expense of the entertainer, and placed full in his view. "Then said the king to to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." *Paxton.*

The Prize Fighter and the Racer at the Isthmian Games.

In order to attain the greater agility and dexterity, it was usual for those who intended to box in the games, to exercise their arms with the gauntlet on, when they had no antagonist near them, and in which a man would of course beat the air. In the foot race, the runners, of whatever number they were, ranged themselves in a line, after having drawn lots for their places. While they waited the signal to start, they practised, by the way of prelude, various motions to awaken their activity, and to keep their limbs pliable, and in a right temper. They kept themselves breathing by small leaps, and making little excursions, which were a kind of trial of their speed and agility; in such exercises, they might be said with great propriety to *run uncertainly*, towards no particular point, and with no direct or immediate view to the prize. Both these allusions occur in the declaration of the apostle: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." He did not engage in his Christian course, as one doubtful in himself, whether in pursuing the path of duty, he should have the honour of being crowned at last or not; as they are, who know that one only receives the prize; nor did he exercise himself unto godliness, like boxers or wrestlers, who sometimes fight in jest, or merely to prepare for the combat, or to display their strength and agility, while they had no resistance to encounter, no enemy to subdue, no reward to merit; but he pressed on, fully persuaded that by the grace of God, he should obtain an incorruptible crown from the hands of his Redeemer. *ibid.*

The effects of Moon-light on the Eyes.

In Mr. Carne's, "Letters from the East," is the following remark, which aptly illustrates several passages of Scripture. The effect of the moonlight on the eyes in this country (Egypt) is singularly injurious, the natives tell you, as I found afterwards they also did in Arabia, always to cover your eyes when you

sheep in the open air. It is rather strange, that the passage in the Psalms. "The sun shall not strike thee by day nor the moon by night, (Ps. cxxi. 6.) should not have been thus illustrated as the allusion seems direct. The moon here really strikes and affects the sight, when you sleep exposed to it, much more than the sun: a fact of which I had a very unpleasant proof one night, and took care to guard against it afterwards. Indeed the sight of a person who should sleep with his face exposed at night would soon be utterly impaired or destroyed.

THE MESSIAHSHIP OF JESUS OF NAZARETH.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

It appears to me that a ready and sure way to settle the dispute respecting the person of Jesus Christ, would be, carefully to attend to the nature of the person promised and predicted; who was expected, and who appeared and was recognised as the Christ.

It was promised to Abraham, that one of his race should be the instrument or agent of God, in the salvation and happiness of the human race.—A descendant of Abraham, must in his nature be like Abraham, a human being, and no more than a human being.

Jesus the Messiah of God was promised as the seed of David. A son, or descendant of David could not possess a nature higher than that from which he sprung. He was predicted as the son of David; and as the son of David he was acknowledged by those who believed in his divine mission.

When the question was put by Jesus to the Jews, "What think ye concerning the Christ, from whom do you expect him to descend?" they immediately replied, "From David," he is to be the son of David. Consequently they expected their Messiah as a man; and though the Jews have resisted, and do still resist the claims of Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah; yet

they expect their Messiah, as a descendant of Abraham, as a son of David, a human being.

At the first appearance of Jesus he was hailed as the Messiah, "We have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph," and consequently a son of David.

The apostles declared that God had fulfilled to that generation the promises made to thair fathers, in having raised up to them Jesus. Speaking directly of David, he says, "Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus. "Remember," says the apostle to Timothy, hold it forth to others, "That Jesus Christ, of the race of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel. Of whom, says Paul, i.e. of the fathers, Christ was, by natural descent, for that is the meaning of the term "according to the flesh."

In the book of the Revelation, Jesus is said, in our translation to be the "root and offspring of David."—It would be better rendered, whose root is David, or, it may be rendered, "a scion from the root of David," which comes to the same thing.

The identity of the Messiah's person rests entirely on the proof of his being a lineal descendant from David; and this can only be proved by admitting the fact, as it is asserted in the New Testament, that he was really and literally the son of Joseph by Mary to whom Joseph was married.

If the story of the miraculous conception of Jesus, contained in the forged introductions to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, could be proved to be true, it would not only destroy the identity of Jesus as the Messiah, but it would take him out of the rank of human beings, and make of his person an unique order, a solitary class, neither God nor man, but an order of being between both. It is, dropping this consideration, quite plain that he could not be the son of David merely by being the son of Mary, because she was not a descendant of David; and had she been so, it would have availed nothing to prove Jesus a descendant from David, because the Jews never reckoned their

genealogies in the female line. If therefore the orthodox notion were true, that the Holy Ghost was the father of Jesus, it could not be proved that Jesus was a descendant from David, unless it could be proved that David was an ancestor of that Holy Ghost!

I conclude then, Sir, that Jesus of Nazareth can be proved to be the Messiah predicted by the ancient prophets, only by the proof of his being the real, the legitimate son of Joseph the carpenter of Nazareth.

I am your constant reader,

PHILOMATH.

RELIGIOUS POLICY.

The following is one of the minutes of Conference of the Wesleyan Methodists.

"The Conference approves of the steps which have been taken by the Book Committee respecting the publication of a complete and standard edition of the works of the Rev. JOHN WESLEY, and directs that such an edition of those works shall be forthwith printed.—Each Travelling Preacher in Great Britain, and every Missionary employed in our Foreign Stations is REQUIRED to take a copy at Five Shillings per volume, to be paid at the time of publication. The Travelling Preachers in Ireland, also, shall be at liberty to order a copy at the price just named. And any Local Preacher, whose name is found regularly inserted on the plan of the circuit in which he resides, shall have the privilege, if he request it, of taking a copy for his own personal use, on the same terms." p. 68.

Who will now say, that "the children of this world are wiser, in their generation than the children of light?" Religious bodies, especially the priests who generally compose what is called the church, always look to this world, while they point the path to another. [Editor.]

BIBLE CONTESTS.

From the Moon Review; a work on Ireland (which derives its title from a moonshine policy,) edited by a Mr. Atkinson, Author of "Ireland exhibited to England" and of other works on the state of that country.

As we feel it to be our duty to scent out sophistries, to unravel mysteries, to mount up to first principles, and to pursue premises to their last conclusions; we shall take a slight glance at the plan of controversy that appears to be pursued by our modern champions in theology; and if in the prosecution of this object, we should examine those facile weapons of the combatants, the bible and the press, it will assist us to discover on which side of the controversy truth has taken her position; or whether indeed she has planted her standard in either of the contending hosts.

We take good notice then in the first instance, that the combatants in this warfare, do not fight empty handed; and we take equal notice, that those who are paid nothing do not fight at all.—However to do justice to the champions who do fight, we must confess that their zeal is a very considerable improvement upon the old system, (we mean the Protestant system—for the Catholics are never idle in their own quarters) when every man was left to shift for himself, and to choose his own way.

Now this is certainly an improvement upon the old system, and augurs well for the religious interests of Ireland; for it will be a very bad thing indeed for simple truth, if while the Doctors are scrambling in all directions for the loaves and fishes, her quiet advocates cannot get a word squeezed in, in favor of their mistress, or the public eye directed for a moment, (while the Doctors are taking breath,) to the charms of that divine simplicity, which are infinitely superior to all the pagan ornaments of the most rich and gaudy PRIESTESS.

The Protestant Doctors then have begun to work a little for their money—at length, for a revenue of some millions, which their predecessors long peaceably enjoyed, (peace be to their

manes) and after having seen the end of all which the penal code could accomplish, they have opened a battery of bibles upon popery; and in this warfare, Lieutenant Singer and his associates (acting we presume under the command of Lieutenant General Magee of the Dublin garrison) displaying great prowess, as did also the officers upon the other side, (under General Doyle) in the late grand campaigns of Waterford, Cork, and Carlow.

You will recollect gentlemen, that this was a bible war, and as the Bible is an arsenal out of which all parties take arms to fight—it is as fair that we should raise from the floor or foundation of that stupendous armoury, one of little David's pebbles, as that the champions in that warfare, should take possession of Goliath's staff, and of Samson's jaw bone—Of this jaw bone indeed they made most copious use in that campaign—but we challenge all those who heard them, and all those who read the numerous reports of the engagement, to prove that they brought the matter at issue to a conclusion, or touched upon a single point that could have the slightest tendency to enlighten the good people of this country, upon the tithe question, the Bishop's enormous revenues, or the policy of loading the poor peasantry of Ireland with the maintainence of two churches! Considering that the curiosity of the people, might at one time or another have driven the Doctors to the verge of this crazy precipice, it was wise of the contending armies to sound a truce. With pompous appearances of preparation for a new engagement, some difference of opinion as to the mode and manner of conducting the war, always furnished a feasible public pretence for continuing the truce—until at lenght Lieutenant M'Sweeny, of the garrison of Carlow, who had resigned his commission at head quarters, in order to fight the whole garrison of Dublin single handed, continuing *very sick*, and being very captious in his conditions, returned to England in order to recruit his forces; and the Dublin officers trembled for the safety of the p—d—r deposited in their garrison, and the war was discontinued by mutual consent—and we hear no more at present about this

bible contest than if the Generals were all dead, or that Mr. Hume's motion upon the question of church property in Ireland, had passed the two houses of Parliament, and received the Royal assent.

As the question of Church property was prudently kept in the back ground (for even the Romish Priests themselves touch it with great delicacy) so was also that equally vital question, *What was christianity in the beginning?*—Since in truth, this question is to religion, what parliamentary reform is to political corruption, the cure of all,—so we shall make so far free with that book which was the occasion of the war, as to submit a few questions out of it, to the Doctors; and we shall thank them most particularly to explain their meaning.

1st. What does Christ mean by saying, "freely ye have received, freely give?"

2d. Had the Apostles any ecclesiastical revenues?

3d. If the civil governments of that day, had offered them such revenues, would they have received them?

4th. Are pluralities, and the princely revenues of Bishops, consistent with the christian institution?

5th. Are ministers of the Gospel bound to imitate the example of St. Paul, who, by his own testimony, "laboured in the Gospel more abundantly than they all," and yet laboured with his own hands also, as a tent maker, for his own maintenance?

6th. If christian ministers possess a competent private property; or if they derive from the exercise of various useful professions, a competent income, is it lawful for them also to take an income from the state or from the people?

7th. Were those duties called the duties of the priesthood; that is, the legislative, executive, and doctrinal duties of the church, (for as to the word sacrament, it has no existence in the bible) were those duties imposed *exclusively* upon the Apostles, or were they exercised during the lives of the Apostles and for sometime afterwards, by all gifted members of the church, and regarded by them as a common privilege and a common property?

8th. Was Christianity in the beginning, a religion of faith and feeling, or of form only—and were the acts even of the Apostles, all infallible—(we mean not here the treachery of Judas, nor the weakness of St. Peter when he thought to walk upon the water, when he denied his master, or when guilty of that act of dissimulation for which Paul withstood him to the face) but were their *religious acts all infallible*, and if so, how will the Doctors dispose of the next query?

9th. Did Christ institute twelve Apostles or thirteen—and if you can prove that he instituted thirteen, you may prove that he instituted thirteen hundred, but if twelve only, whether was he whom the Apostles elected by the solemn forms of prayer and imposition of hands—or Saul of Tarsus, whom Christ himself elected from Heaven, the minister properly ordained to fill up the blank produced in that number, by the fall of Judas?

10th. What did St. Paul mean by saying that the Prophets (those who according to his exposition, spoke "to edification, exhortation and comfort)" should speak in the church "ONE BY ONE," that all might learn, and all be comforted, if one man is to comfort *us* with the acceptance of a very large income, for appropriating all that comfort to *himself*?

Many such questions as these might be proposed to the Doctors of the church, from that book, about which they are so zealously contending—but if they answer the few that we have selected *satisfactorily*, (and which we predict they will not do) we shall proceed no farther.

The more perfectly we become acquainted with priests of all descriptions, the more perfectly we are convinced, that they are, all over the world (with however a few valuable exceptions in point of personal virtue) men *substantially* of one motive and of one creed, with a considerable diversity of manner however in the operation of this unique principle.

Be it observed, that this diversity of manner is not the effect of a difference in the principle of the GRAND SPRING by which the whole machine of priest-craft is kept moving. That spring is unique, and has been so in all ages and nations, from the priests of Diana to the priests of Dan—and those differences which appear in the out-works of the machine, are the mere result of accidental circumstances.—For instance, one man is a Persian priest, because he was born and ordained in Persia,—another is a Jewish priest, because he was born and brought up a Jew,—a third belongs to the order of Confucius, because he was born and educated in China. In India the priest is a Brahmin,—in the Ottoman Empire a Mahometan,—in Russia a Greek of the Christian order—in Italy a Roman of the same, and in Ireland there are priests of two orders, the reformed and the non-reformed,—but in our opinion the deepest difference that

exists between these is— that the predecessors of the reformed having beat the predecessors of the non-reformed in a very tedious war, and taken from them the riches of the wealthiest church in Europe : the latter naturally wish to get back what they have lost; and the former determined to hold what they have got, wish to spring a mine under the active exertions of the non-reformed (who have nothing left but their opinions) in order that the troops of the enemy being brought over to their standard, they may eat the p— d—r of their predecessors in security and peace.—This appears to us to be the true state of the question. (*To be continued.*)

RELIGIOUS TESTS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

At a time when the mother church of this Island, with her Creator the Parliament, and her legitimate head the King, is opening her hand in liberality to the Dissenters, it is curious to learn that the Presbyterians of Ireland, and the Methodists, who can be denominated of *every where*, for wherever the sun shines, they gather the fruits of the earth, should both have imposed on their ministers, &c. a test of doctrine.

Not having been able to meet with a form of the Methodist Test, I shall feel myself much obliged to any of your readers who will, through the medium of your pages furnish me with a copy. The disciples of the modern Loyala are likely to stretch the cord too tight ; no doubt can be entertained that as soon as knowledge and science shall be found to progress among the people, the constitution of that body must either change—or the society will be broken up. EUSEBIUS.

SELECTED POETRY.

OCEAN.

The following is extracted from a volume entitled "Mont Blanc, and other Poems, by Mary Ann Browne, in her fifteenth year."

GOD is in every thing;—His voice is heard
In the light murmur of the water fall—
In the gay music of each singing bird,
That tells there is a providence o'er all;

But most from thee, oh Ocean! does He call,
And in thy wonders admiration claim;—
And where 'twixt nations stands thy liquid wall,
He builds the lasting altar of his fame,
And writes on thee in waves His Everlasting Name.

Farewell, vast Ocean!—beautiful art thou
In calm and tempest:—now calm reigns o'er thee;
Serene and quiet is thy glossy brow
Thou glorious mirror of the Deity!
And how sublimely grand art thou, when He,
In foaming characters, upon thy face
Writes His almighty anger! Thou, proud Sea!
Art the wide page—the chosen tablet-place—
On which He chooses His tremendous wrath to trace.

Oh Ocean! it is o'er thy trackless way,
He shews himself most mighty:—there He wields
The sceptre that the winds and waves obey:—
He rides in storms above thy watery fields.
Thou seemest most His own;—to Man He yields
Part of the rule o'er earth,—but over thee
He shows His anger,—and His mercy shields
The seaman over many a stormy sea,—
And there sweeps many a one into Eternity.

Farewell, vast Ocean!—thou hast borne me home:—
Now, not a wave disturbs thy quiet breast;
But o'er that breast I never more shall roam,
For now my weary wanderings shall find rest;
I go to meet the beings I love best—
Beings from whom I've long been torn apart.
Yes;—I again shall see them and be blest;
And they shall heal the wounds of this worn heart:
I ne'er shall tempt thee more—tho' beautiful thou art.

Farewell!—perchance full many a year will pass,
Before I shall look on thy face again:—
Say, wilt thou be the clear pellucid glass
That now I leave thee?—wilt thou be so then?—
Or wilt thou, in thine anger and disdain,
Throw thy white foam upon this very spot,—
While o'er thee tempests shall assert their reign?
Thou art all silent—and thou answerest not.
Farewell, wide Sea!—this eve will long be unforgot.

I am not young;—my life has pass'd its prime.
Perhaps I ne'er again shall tread this shore.
Life is a billow on the sea of time
That, once burst, foams and rises never more:—
Perchance mine may soon melt amid the roar
Of tempests rising on that boundless sea;
Then will my grief and sorrow all give o'er;—
Then shall *Life's* joy or misery cease to be,
And I shall be resolv'd in vast Eternity.

F. B. Wright, Printer, Swift's Court, Castle Street Liverpool.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—Jesus.

No 47, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d* NOVEMBER 1, 1828.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

DEUT. xxxii. 11.

The tender affection which the female cherishes for her young, is described by Moses in these memorable terms; "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so, the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." It is indeed pretended by some writers, that when the eaglets are somewhat grown, the mother kills the weakest or the most voracious of them; but were the fact admitted, it is no satisfactory proof that she is without natural affection. It is well known that several animals of the mildest dispositions forsake their young, when they find it impossible to provide for their subsistence. The parent eagles, says Buffon, not having sufficient for themselves, seek to reduce their family; and as soon as the young ones are strong enough to fly and provide for themselves, they chase them from the nest, and never permit them to return. The account of this celebrated naturalist so far agrees with the statement of the sacred writer; according to whom, the eagle stirreth up her nest, that is, rouses her young from their sloth and inactivity, and provokes them to try their wings by fluttering about her nest. When she sees them indifferent to her admonitions, or afraid to follow her example, "she spreadeth abroad her wings; taketh them, and beareth them upon her wings." The remarkable circumstances of bearing them upon her wings, is alluded to in another part of Scripture:

"Ye have seen," said Jehovah to Israel, "what I did unto Egypt, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." (Exod. xix. 4.) Many passages in the writings of ancient authors countenance the idea, that the eagle actually takes up her timid young ones, and bears them on her wings till they venture to fly. Ælian says, that when Tilgamus, a Babylonian boy, fell from the top of a tower, before he reached the ground, an eagle received and bore him up on her back. A similar story is recorded in the writings of Pausanias, who tells us, that an eagle flew under Aristimenes, who was cast by the Lacedæmonians from the top of a tower, and carried him on her wings till he reached the ground in safety. These stories, although the mere creatures of imagination, shew that the idea of the eagle bearing a considerable weight on her wings, was familiar to the ancients. It is not to be supposed, that she wafts her unfledged young through the voids of heaven, or to distant places; the meaning probably is, that she aids with her wings their feeble and imperfect attempts to fly, till, emboldened by her example, and their own success, they fearlessly commit themselves to the air.

So did Jehovah for his chosen people: When they were slumbering in Goshen, or groaning in despair of recovering their freedom, he sent his servant Moses to rouse them from their inglorious sloth, to assert their liberty, and to break their chains upon the heads of their oppressors. He carried them out of Egypt, and led them through the wilderness into their promised inheritance. He taught them to know their strength; he instructed them in the art of war; he led them to battle, and by his almighty arm routed their enemies.

So admirable are the qualities of the eagle, whatever is sublime in heaven, or excellent on the earth, is likened by the sacred writers to that bird. The Most High does not consider it unbecoming his dignity to compare, in more instances than one, his providential vigilance, his support and protection, to the wings of an eagle, and to the various methods she employs to supply the wants of her young, and to instruct them how to provide for themselves. Under the same comparison, the prophet Ezekiel

endeavours to give his people some faint idea of the powerful intelligence, the unwearied activity, and amazing swiftness of holy angels: "The four living creatures had each the face of an eagle; and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies." In the tenth chapter, the prophet was favoured with the same vision; and in his description, he expressly calls the four living creatures the cherubim, one of the names by which the angels are distinguished; in the fourteenth verse, he repeats the remark: "every one had the face of an eagle;" and observe in the twentieth verse, "This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel, by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubim."

Paxton's Illustrations.

BIBLE CONTESTS.

From the Moon Review; a work on Ireland (which derives its title from a moonshine policy,) edited by a Mr. Atkinson, Author of "Ireland exhibited to England" and of other works on the state of that country.

(Concluded from our last.)

WITH regard to the mode in which these controversies might be examined by a man who sees through and equally esteems them all. We for our own part, would proceed in something of the following manner: taking, for instance, the arguments of a Protestant champion, hot from the anvil of trinity, with his howitzer full charged with quotations from scripture and ecclesiastical history, proving that the church of Rome is corrupt.

We would first plant our foot the whole way across this Author's cannon—that is his unanswerable premises.—We would then, in imitation of his own example, compound into Protestant gun-powder,—that select portion of his conclusions which apply to the Pope's party; and having discharged this ammunition full in the face of his Holiness and the Cardinals,

we would next proceed to collect and apply that portion of the conclusions which belong to the Protestant churches (but which the College General, Dr. Magee for instance, would no doubt in the heat of his zeal totally overlook) and compounding these much injured and shamefully paralyzed fragments of scripture and ecclesiastical history into sound primitive christian ammunition, we would then point the artillery of the Dublin garrison against the characteristic humility and poverty of the protestant bishops, (so perfectly corresponding with those examples of Peter and Paul which the General preaches!) then at the prodigal hospitality, open gates, and perfect freedom of access granted to the people by the said bishops, agreeably to the scriptures then at their impolitic liberality to the clergy of the church which preceded them, and to the working clergy of their own church! —then at the inconveniencies which they endure from long fasting "loving hospitality," hating covetousness," "being apt to teach," mortifying the deeds of the body," trampling on "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world," and exercising their functions by such a pure and spiritual authority, as leaves them nothing wherein to glory but "the Cross of Christ!"

We should then endeavour to direct the same ammunition of the Dublin garrison (and any gunpowder manufacturer who takes the trouble of turning up its stores may easily collect the materials there) against many other established practices of the existing churches, Protestant and Catholic, and without doing much violence to the text, would prove, that there is not a visible Church of Christ existing in the world.—Standing upon the same unalterable premises, we would ask General Doctor Magee, Lieutenant Singer, or any other officer of the Dublin garrison, to lay his hand upon his heart, and say, whether he knows one individual upon earth, that exhibits those proofs of divine *disinterestedness*, which the gospel every where enjoins?—one solitary example of that devotion to the cause of truth and human happiness, which marked the characters of the first christian heroes, and which they have handed down to posterity, as the evidences of a celestial faith in a social form?

Dean Swift, in a piece entitled "An argument against abolishing Christianity," has the following expressions.

"I hope no reader imagines me so weak as to stand up in the defence of real Christianity; such as used in primitive times (if we may believe the authors of those ages) to have an influence upon men's belief and actions—to aim at the restoring of that, would indeed be a wild project; it would be to dig up foundations; to destroy at one blow all the wit and half the learning of the kingdom; to break the entire frame and constitutions of things; to ruin trade, extinguish arts and sciences with the professors of them; in short to turn our courts, exchanges and shops, into a desert; and would be full as absurd, as the proposal of Horace, when he advised the Romans, all in a body, to leave their city, and seek a new seat in some remote part of the world, by way of cure for the corruption of their manners.

"Hence the candid reader will easily understand my discourse to be, a defence only of nominal christianity, the other having been for some time wholly laid aside by general consent, as utterly inconsistent with our present schemes of wealth and power!!!"

Bravo! what a noble confession is this from one of the first wits of the last age, and a churchman too! Now if it be not more evident than that a man cannot be shaved unless he be sitting present? or that there cannot be two mountains without a valley between, than that this confession of Dean Swift is pure matter of history—what portion of common sense may we suppose that man to have, who goes about to prove that the practice of the Church of Rome, is inconsistent with the doctrines and practice of the primitive church and of the fathers; since it as is clear as noon-day, that all visible churches equally abjure in their particular practice, that doctrine of charity which is the essence of the Gospel, and which it prescribes to them, under the simple form of loving their neighbours as themselves—and although they wear many costumes and have many forms, many creeds and many shibboleths, yet there is one test by which they are all known to be worshippers of one God—*The uniform tenacity with which they adhere to every temporal possession however redundant or however loudly the wants of others may call for a distribution of the surplus*—Their cant of piety there-

fore as it excites the contempt of the philosopher so it deserves his ridicule—and no pittance from the hand of enormous wealth, can blunt the edge of the well merited satire,—since the overflowings of misery must be thrown somewhere, or they would become offensive in the streets, and the honest tradesman who contributes his mite from a pure motive, and whose name is not emblazoned in the lists of ostentation, is perhaps the only person whose virtue stands like a star of the first magnitude above the clouds of suspicion.

DRUNKENNESS,

THE BESETTING SIN OF ENGLISHMEN.

We copy the following Pamphlet which was lately printed at Chorley, and recommend it to our readers: not that we think it applicable, (so we hope) to their particular case; but with a view to furnish them with arguments by which they may dissuade others from the practice of this gross, this beastly vice.—Ed.

AMONGST all the vices to which degenerate man is addicted, none is more disgusting, irrational, or destructive than that of *Drunkenness*, and though recommended by none, is universally prevalent. Though we assume the name of Christians, our practice is decidedly against our profession, and in this, as in some other things, it is well if we are not even "worse than infidels." All classes in society are addicted to habits of intemperance; the gentleman, the tradesman, the mechanic, in their respective spheres, and even females, forgetting their natural modesty, and breaking through every restraint, are often found intoxicated. Where shall we begin the detail of the exhibitions of this vice? In the gentleman's parlour, the drawing room of a party, the tavern, the traveller's room, the pot-house, the jerry-shop, the brothel, or the public street? All these places in their turns are the scenes of dissipation and excess. Many of the abandoned poor, regardless of their reputation, are seen

prowling through the streets in a state of intoxication, whilst others, collecting in parties, seek obscurity to avoid detection. The public pot-house, of all others, is the place most conspicuous for disorder and drunkenness; these houses seem devoted to Bacchanalian excesses, and are the rendezvous of all habitual drunkards. Visit them in the evenings, especially on Saturday evenings and at any public festival, and you see genius, merit, health, wealth, character and happiness all sacrificed to their lust. You see them staggering at the door, and frequently insulting every person they meet; in the house you hear brawling, cursing, swearing, and the most abominable language. The guests seem as if they would endeavour to outvie each other in vice and wickedness. Men and women, and frequently prostitutes, are in some houses seen drinking together, and exhibiting scenes so disgusting, as to lead one to weep for the degradation of our species, and to wonder at the toleration of such enormities in a land of christians. Another class visit the taverns and rooms appropriated to evening drinkers; these, with the advantages of education, seldom expose themselves to public odium, but they are not less intemperate; fascinated by the influence of company and by the excitement of liquor, they go perhaps every night, and with neglected wives and families at home, they protract their stay till a late hour. The frivolities of the age and the renowned vices of the day are the topics of their conversation, and thus they spend a considerable portion of their time and means in a manner which militates against their character as tradesmen, and is highly injurious both to soul and body. With these may be mentioned many mercantile travellers, who are noted for extravagance and excess. Under a pretence of honour, they consider it a sort of duty to make away with a certain value in liquor every day, and if there happen to be a sober man among them, he is actually obliged to force his appetite or incur disgrace. Like true Epicures, they must have every dainty of the season, and often treat with ungrateful contempt that for which any reasonable man would offer his fervent thanks to the Almighty. The great evil is, that accommodations at inns and public houses, are always to be paid for

through the medium of eating and drinking, but especially the latter, and hence many are induced to take what they would otherwise refuse, to discharge their obligations. If a regular charge in money was made for every accommodation, it would contribute much to the sobriety of the age. Excess in liquor is not unfrequently found in the parlours of private gentlemen; some enjoy it in solitude, and some with parties like themselves. In this way they kill time and promote sensual excitement, their only substitute for a magnanimous mind. In getting up these feasts, they strive which can excel in the most splendid dinners and expensive wines. Whilst thousands, equally deserving with themselves cannot get a sufficiency of the coarsest fair, invention is put to the rack, no expense is spared, creation itself is ransacked to give splendour and sumptuousness to their feasts. Instead of christian sobriety "revelling and drunkenness, chambering, and wantonness" characterize most of their meetings. To such excesses are some addicted, that it is well known that they take a regular dose to relieve themselves of the consequence which over-charged nature would produce. Some have prudence enough to conceal the character of their midnight revels, but others glory in their shame. One of this class was heard to boast that seven of them had managed twenty bottles! At these meetings are Justices of Peace, the guardians of our bodies, and Ministers of Religion, the watchmen of our souls. What effect can exhortations to humility, self-denial, and crucifixion of the flesh receive from such an example? Or how can they warn the poor and the profligate of the consequences of drinking while they are the victims of intemperance themselves? Indeed, at public festivals, all classes seem to give an unbridled license to sensual indulgences; hence at fairs, races, and especially at elections, not satisfied with the relaxation of harmless mirth, they give themselves up to every species of licentiousness. It is really painful to attempt to enlarge upon this the besetting sin of our nation, especially when we consider the high attainments we profess of intellectual improvement. I will therefore proceed to direct your attention to some of the *causes, consequences*, and *remedies* of this vice.

The *causes* of drunkenness are various, but those which seem to have the strongest and most direct influence, are, *association*, and the *imbecility* of the *rational mind*. Till the mind becomes contaminated, reason impaired, and the influence of association predominant, there is not, I believe, any inherent desire for excessive drinking. It is a habit, influenced indeed by minor causes, but in most cases formed by *association*. Drunkards, whether rich or poor, will acknowledge this. There is no vice or virtne in the whole round of Man's conduct, so decidedly produced, matured, and established by the power of example as the habit of drinking. Indeed, the glass makes a part of the civilities of society, and many can testify, that what was first offered through mistaken kindness, has proved little less than deadly poison. However a person may be determined against excesses, if he choose the company of those who frequent the tavern or the tap-room, his resolutions will fail him, and he will soon become the victim of bad example. A glass for friendship, another for fear of being singular, a third by the importunities of his comrades, and then they have him secure; reason, his only guide looses its sway, and inflated feelings defy every restraint. Every successive meeting they find him gentler in his opposition, till like themselves, he becomes an habitual drunkard. With the langour of the past night's excesses, he goes to the alehouse in the morning just for a single glass, and determined not to exceed; he meets as usual with company, and seldom returns till completely inebriated. In genteel parties we see the same influence. However sober in habits and determined in mind some individuals may be, the spurious hospitality now kept up, is sure to overcome them. Instead of rational recreation, select reading, profitable conversation, and the cherishing of virtuous habits, the time is spent in eating and drinking, luxury and fashionable parade. Not to take the glass would be considered a mark of puerility and almost as an insult offered to the company. All the fascinations of a drawing room, and the impetuous clamour of the guests are set in array against the voice of reason, till the most determined are overcome by their

persuasion, and before the evening is spent are heard uniting in the mischievous cry of "one glass more." "Evil communications corrupt good manners." All who frequent dissipated company will find the temptation too strong to resist.

God has given to man *reason* to discern good from evil, to judge of the propriety of every indulgence, and to measure and limit the exercise of our appetites by a rule which would invariably secure our own good. It is an anchor of the soul; the helm to guide man against the strong impulse of animal feeling. It tells us what is right and reveals the dangers of refusing its guidance. Even in the midst of our revels it continues to check; it struggles for controul till inflated nature demands its silence. All men profess to admire its council, yet where in the whole circle of hard drinkers, we may ask, is the practical deference paid to this unerring monitor, or the gratitude to him who gave it? By excessive and continued indulgence, the animal appetites predominate, and becomes so inveterate as soon to supplant the use of the reasoning powers. We sometimes talk of aberration of mind, but never was so much of it seen, as we are compelled to witness every day in the conduct and behaviour of drunken men. They degrade themselves to the level of beasts which have no understanding, and as to that moderation which nature requires, brutes are angels compared to them. What reason can there be in the wilful waste of time and property, the loss of character and reputation, the destruction of every domestic and social comfort, the wanton sacrifice of health and life, the abandonment of every moral restraint, and the certain exposure to the torments of hell! When reason is annihilated the fool may dance and sing, but the morning of repentance will come, when alas! it will be too late. To admit drunkenness to be a dangerous vice, a pernicious indulgence, and yet repeatedly to practise it, is, without any other evidence, an awful condemnation of ourselves. "If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts and knows all things."

(To be continued.)

ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION OF ENGLAND.

(From a Pamphlet first printed 1733.*)*

I. We have here in England two provincial archbishops, Canterbury and York; each of them has his princely retinue for the support of his temporal grandeur, as well as a numerous body of spiritual officers, for the exercise and execution of his ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority.

In the number of their temporal retinue, we may reckon their stewards and bailiffs of lordships, manors, lands, &c. stewards of their households, gentleman-ushers, ushers of their halls, comptrollers, yeoman of their horse, secretaries, house keepers, purveyors, butlers, cooks, &c.

And among the latter, their suffragans, vicars-general, guardians of spiritualities, chancellors, officials, commissaries, deans, arch-deacons, registrars, deputy-registrars, advocates, apparitors, projectors, *cum multis aliis.*

And as the officers and attendants of these archbishops are of two kinds, so are their courts, viz.

1. Courts temporal, as courts leet, courts baron, customary courts, courts of franchises and privileges, courts of piepowder, (for some of them keep fairs and markets) and other like courts.

2. Courts spiritual, as the court of arches (to Canterbury) prerogative courts, courts of delegates, consistory courts, or courts of audience, courts of faculties for granting licences and dispensations (with divers others.)

II. Next, as to bishops (who in most things imitate archbishops) we may observe,

1. That within England we have twenty-four diocesan bishops.

2. That these have also their several trains of domestic officers, servants, and attendants, both temporal and spiritual.

But I shall not at present enter into a disquisition of their estates, in lordships, manors, lands, palaces, gardens, &c. so I shall here wave all enquiry into the state of their temporal re-

venues; my present intention being chiefly to remark on their ecclesiastical or spiritual courts and jurisdictions. Wherein I observe, that our twenty-four bishops have, to assist them in the exercise and execution of their spiritual jurisdiction, the following officers, viz.

24 Suffragans, if not double the number, with their attendants. 26 Chancellors, with their attendants. 26 Registrars, with their attendants. 26 Deputy registrars. with their clerks, &c. 26 Gentlemen apparitors. 52, or more, proctors; and 150, or more, common apparitors. With many other officers, notaries, clerks, and attendants.

Note, Bath and Wells, as well as Litchfield and Coventry, have their distinct courts, i. e. one in each division of those dioceses.

There are also under these archbishops and bishops, at least, 60 arch-deaconries. And to these belong, 60 arch-deacons' courts; which consist of 60 commissaries or judges of those courts; as also 60 or more surrogates, or deputy commissaries. 60 Registrars, with their deputies, scribes, and clerks. 120 Proctors, i. e. if we allow but two to each court. 200 or more apparitors, with a multitude of promoters and informers; *cum aliis officiariis.*

But further, besides the before-mentioned officers, we may observe another, who, in their ecclesiastical economy, is called a dean, in latin decanus. For that, 'tis said, in his first institution, he was to preside over ten parishes, which was therefore called a deanery.

But deans are now with us distinguished into four or five kinds, viz.

1. Cathedral deans; these, with their respective chapters, have in many things a concurrent jurisdiction with the bishop of the diocese: and some authorities they have which are independent of him, The number of this kind of deans in England and Wales is twenty-four. For at St. David's and Landaff they have no Cathedral deans, the office of dean being there exercised by the bishops themselves.

2. Collegiate deans; some whereof have all the concomitants and attendants of a cathedral dean, except that of having a bishop at their head; such a dean is that of Westminster College, &c.

3. Exempt deans, i. e. such as are exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, as having an independent ecclesiastical jurisdiction within their own particular precincts; such a dean is that of Battle in Sussex, who is, or may be, invested in his deanery by the King's Letters Patent, and needs no institution or induction by the bishop or archdeacon. Quære, of the dean or provost of Eaton College, if an exempt, &c.

4. Non-exempt deans, i. e. such as are not so exempt as aforesaid. These are generally donatives in the archbishops, and consequently have a peculiar jurisdiction derived from them; such are the deans of the arches (and St. Martin le Grand) in London; the dean of Bocking in Essex, with some some others under the archbishop of Canterbury: and I have heard of the like under the archbishop of York, but can at present give no certain account of them.

5. Rural deans; these originally had no judicial power, being only substituted by the bishop to assist him in granting administrations and probats of wills. But I am informed, that at this day divers of those deans have arrogated to themselves a species of jurisdiction. Though 'tis said their chief business is only to feast the clergy at visitations, for which they have a licence to raise contributions within their deanries.—*See Nelson's Rights of the Clergy*, 252, 253, &c.

(To be concluded in our next.)

LINES FROM THE GOSPEL LUMINARY.

"AS I LOOKED, I THOUGHT."

O what a sight it is to see,
How Christian bigots disagree,
And with each other strive and fight,
Say, "you are wrong, and I am right."

Some are so fill'd with party zeal,
They seem determin'd not to yield;
With some they cannot join in prayer,
And will not worship where they are.

Some say that God is surely *three*
While others say it cannot be,
They rather think God is but *one*
And Jesus Christ his only Son.

Some say that God has ne'er design'd
The means of grace to all mankind;
But by his sov'reign wise decree,
Has doom'd a part to misery.

Some say that God was fill'd with love,
And sent his son from heaven above,
To ransom all from sin and woe,
And save them whether they would or no.

But Scripture long has testified,
That Jesus Christ for all has died:
He says, "repent, in me believe,"
Such only can salvation have.

So then no more let Christians fight,
Say, "you are wrong, and I am right;"
But all agree with one accord,
To follow on to know the Lord.

J. P.

ORTHODOX RANCOUR, RANT, AND DR. RAFFLES.

THE poor Unitarians, now deemed the common enemies of mystery, superstition, and orthodox absurdity, are sure to meet with reproof whenever the "Sons of God" come together. Whatever be the occasion of their assembling there is, generally one accusing spirit, one *Satan* to be found among the saints, one accuser of these heretical brethren. What could induce the Learned and Reverend Thomas Raffles, LL. D., of Liverpool, to travel so far out of the record, and the services of the day, and so unmercifully, so unsparingly, and unmanly to *damn* the whole body of those who do not believe that a man is God, and that God is a man, or, in the Doctor's own words as reported in the York Herald, "who do not believe that Jesus Christ is God, the almighty creator and supporter of the universe?" We can account for this on no other principle, than, that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

We wish very much the Rev. Dr. would publish the two Sermons which he is reported to have delivered at the celebration of the Twelfth Anniversary of the opening of Lendal Chapel, in York. We must, we suppose content ourselves with what report has done, *sacred* characters are safe only in *sacred* places, and the pulpit protects the calumniator, who would not be screened in any other place. This is well known to those who occupy that citadal of refuge.

We are informed by the York Herald, that the services to commemmorate the Twelfth Anniversary of this Chapel, commenced on the Tuesday Evening, by the Rev. R. Wood, the Wesleyan minister, and surperintendant of the York district, whose liberal spirit and conduct on the occasion, are much praised by the Editor of the Herald.

And now comes forward a man of different temper and feelings, like the Goliath of Gath, full of defiance, ready to give the poor deluded wretches, if not to the *crows*, to the worm that never shall die, and the fire that shall never be quenched.—

The Report says,

"On Wednesday morning, the pulpit was occupied by the celebrated and highly talented Dr. Raffles, from Liverpool. We, however, were sorry to see the chapel but thinly attended. His text, on this occasion, was from the second of Corinthians, the 4th chapter, and a part of the 5th verse:—"*For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, the Lord.*" In dividing the subject into two separate heads of discourse, and exhibiting the important distinctions between the faithful preacher of the word of God, and the false guide in the christian church, the learned Doctor exhibited a display of oratory, that was at once calculated to rivet the attention and to astonish his hearers. With the most positive and bold declamation he sent to perdition all those who do not believe that Jesus Christ is GOD, the Almighty Creator and Supporter of the Universe; and among other quotations in support of his opinion, he referred to Isaiah ix. v. 6. "*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given—and the government shall be upon his shoulder—and his name shall be*

called Wouderful, Counseller, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." This and the other declarations, he contended, must either be implicitly believed, or the sacred writers were blasphemers—for, if Christ be not God, it will avail little to acknowledge him "*all but*" GOD—he is only a *creature*, and has no right to the high distinction which is given to him in the sacred volume. He concluded by stating in unequivocal terms, that those who teach any other doctrine, are deceivers, and are dragging their deluded followers down with themselves to that horrible pit of destruction, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire shall never be quenched."

We are informed by the Reporter that the learned Dr. amongst other quotations in support of his opinion, (i. e. that Jesus, the son of Joseph the Carpenter, was the Infinite and Eternal God,) referred to Isaiah ix. 6, "For unto us a child is born," &c.—Now, we might say, this is at most a very childish proof; we had thought that even the boyhood of orthodoxy was past; and that no person in the present enlightened age, would have so far forgot himself, as to talk of a God being *born;* and that an infant, depending on its mother's breast for nourishment, was in very deed, the Being who called all things into existence, and on whom all worlds and all beings depend for their preservation. It must however be so, for Dr. Raffles has asserted it, and Dr. Raffles is a learned, and, what is of ten thousand times more consequence, Dr. Raffles is an ORTHODOX man. No wonder that Infidelity stalks through the land, marching with giant strides, when the Creator of the universe is made to owe his existence to a *human female*, to be dandled on her knees, and lulled to sleep by the consoling sounds of her voice, when she sings the "sweet lullaby;" and, when in Christian Congregations in praise of the Being who is without beginning, who is independent on his creatures, is sung,

> "This *Infant* is the Mighty God,
> Come to be suckled and adored."

Let not this be told in Hindostan or in China.

And dares Dr. Raffles doom those who reject such a false, such an heathenish notion respecting the Creator of the universe to the "horrible pit of destruction, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire shall never be quenched?" And did Dr. Raffles really do this? Are his friends aware of it? And do they take no steps to prevent the personal consequences to himself to which such sentiments are likely to lead? We would indeed hope that these sentiments are uttered only under temporary aberrations of the Doctor's mind, and that in his calmer moments he thinks otherwise. To say the least, it is really a RELIGIOUS MADNESS.

We are told in this Report, that on the evening of the same day, the Rev. Mr. Crowther, a Wesleyan minister, performed the devotional service, in a truly christian spirit and manner, which was really gratifying to the liberal mind. After which,

"Dr. Raffles again appeared in the pulpit as the preacher. His text was from John xii. 32—"*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*" In introducing the subject, the learned divine, urged very powerfully that the monosyllable "if" should not be considered as implying any doubt in the mind of the Saviour, as to the death he should die It was known to him before the foundations of this fair world were laid, and before the morning stars sang for joy, he was a self-devoted victim for the ransom of fallen man. He, however, would direct the attention of his hearers to the beautiful symbol exhibited in the 22nd ch. of Numbers—there the armies of Israel are represented as numberless and occupying an extended plain; but all of them of every age and character, alike writhing under the fatal attacks of fiery serpents, the messengers of heaven's vengeance. By repentance, however, the anger of the Lord was removed; and Moses was ordered to lift up a serpent of brass that those who had been bitten might look upon it and live' The joy thereby diffused and the similarity between this and the lifting up, or crucifixion, of Christ, were most eloquently pourtrayed by Dr. Raffles; but it was in his description of the resurrection of the Saviour, that he surpassed even himself. He

called to recollection the celestial cry of "*Lift up your heads ye everlasting gates*," &c., "*and let the king of glory come in.*" Then with the imagination of a painter or a poet, he saw him enter, surrounded by myriads of glorified spirits. A most beautiful diadem crowned his brow, studded with countless precious gems—the souls of those whom he had ransomed—in his hands were the bars of adamant, which he had borne away from the prisons of the damned—Around him was a girdle, inscribed "*The King of Kings and Lord of Lords*,"—and slung upon that girdle, were the keys of Hell suspended—whilst beneath his feet were laid prostrate, and writhing in agony, the infernal spirits whom he had overthrown and conquered. Thus proceeding, he pourtrayed him approaching the throne of mercy, and ere he took his seat, sprinkling it with the sacred and all-sufficient blood of the atonement. But, we will not attempt to report further— the figure, though fine, loses much, when given without the presence and attitude of the orator. It is sufficient to say, that every eye was fixed, every ear was attentive, every faculty was absorbed by the importance of the subject and the eloquence of the preacher; and when he concluded by an appropriate reference to the lamentable deficiency of christian knowledge and sincerity, at the present day, and to the certainty that ere long the nations of the earth should bow the knee to the Saviour of the world, he was extremely animated and impressive." *York Herald, Oct.* 11*th*, 1828.

Of the above it might be sufficient to say, that it is eloquence run mad; or in Shakespear's phrase,

"Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

In the former discourse we are told of a "*Child God*," a "*born* God," now we are led to comtemplate a *dead* God—and a God risen from the dead; and what is surprising, are led to suppose that this God had been a prisoner in the dungeons of the damned; for what else does the following passage imply? "In his hands were the bars of adamant which he had borne away from the prisons of the damned." Does the learned Doc-

tor mean that he tore away the bars in making his escape? We wish he would explain this.

The learned Doctor describes Jesus his God, as having the keys of hell's gates suspended from his girdle; and trampling under his feet "infernal spirits whom he had overthrown and conquered." And where is the wonder of this? Is it wonderful that the source of all power, the omnipotent God himself, should be able to tread upon and even to crush finite beings, creatures in comparison with himself but as moths?

To crown the absurdity comes at last the heathenish notion of the ATONEMENT—"He pourtrays him as approaching the throne of mercy, and ere he took his seat, sprinkling it with the sacred and all-sufficient blood of the atonement." And where, we might ask the learned Dr. does he find this sentiment, "blood of the atonement," or any thing like it in the New Testament? We shall be glad to receive information on this head.

In the mean time we must take the liberty of expressing in strong terms our intire disapprobation and condemnation of rodomontade in the pulpit. We would ask the learned Doctor whether this be preaching "Christ Jesus the Lord," or himself in the stead of preaching the gospel. Had Jesus and his Apostles preached in this way, heathenism would have been the dominant system to the present day. But Jesus and his Apostles were plain men, they addressed their discourses to the hearts and understandings of their hearers, not to their fancy and imagination. Things have changed since that time, and it appears that Dr. Raffles has "not so learned Christ," and that in spite of his text he seems much more disposed to exhibit himself than his Master. All this might pass without much censure, it might excite a smile at its folly; but when such a man mingles with his theatricals, the foul censure, the unqualified condemnation of men, as wise, as learned, as pious as himself, he is unworthy the esteem of society.

One word at parting. We would advise the Doctor, when he preaches again from the same text, to recollect that in preaching Christ Jesus the Lord, his doctrine, his precepts, his exam-

ple ought to be insisted on, instead of that which is the general theme of orthodox ministers, the metaphysical notions respecting his person. These notions, Dr. Raffles must have learned from Ecclesiastical History, had no existence in the christian church till christianity had been spoiled of her primitive simplicity, by the introduction of the Platonic Philosophy. There is one test by which christians are to be known, and that is, by their being embued with the spirit of charity. Without this temper and spirit of the founder of our religion, opinions, gifts, and even the power to work miracles, would leave us but as sounding brass or as a tinkling cymbal."

PHILALETHES.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, AND CATHOLIC LIBERALITY.

His Grace the present Duke of Norfolk is a Catholic. Among his domestics is a female who is a Methodist. This woman is a constant attendant on worship at the Chapel of her religious connections. One of the higher servants complained to the Duke, that this woman lost a great deal of time in going so regularly to Chapel. The Duke inquired where she went. He was told to Bury. To Bury, replied, the Duke, that is four miles; a distance too far for a woman to walk to a place of worship. Let the boy put the horse to the gig, and drive her there and back again, whenever she wishes to go. It is but right that she should worship God, according to her own conscience.

GOD IS EVERY WHERE.

Did men really believe and act under the influence of this great truth, that God is every where, temptations would have less power over the mind, virtue would have a stronger guard, and the resistance to the enticements of evil companions to folly and sin, would be more effectual.

Fidelio was early educated in the principles of christianity,

taught to perform every act of piety out of love to God; and of kindness to his fellow creatures as his brethren, the children of the One God and Father of all. It was the misfortune of Fidelio to be left an orphan at an early age; but though his parents were no longer in the land of the living, he remembered the precepts they had taught him, and particularly their earnest request, that however he was engaged, and wherever he might be, he would remember that he was in the presence of God.

Fidelio was once placed in the way of temptation, and his virtue was in great danger. He was led by his tempter into a retired room, "we are not here sufficiently private," he said—He was then conducted to one still more retired, "here," said she, "no one can see us." "It is not sufficiently retired," he said, "God is every where;"—and loosing her hand, fled from the house. Thus did he overcome the temptation, like the youthful Joseph, and by the influence of the same principle, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God."—"God is every where."

TRUE GREATNESS.

TRUE greatness is not that which arises from situation and rank in this world. The monarch may be hailed as great, and yet the man who fills the throne be in the highest degree contemptible. The rich man may be esteemed by the world a great man, and yet be poor in intellect, mean in disposition, and contemptible in the eyes of those who see him in private.

"MYLO, forbear to call him great,
Who only boasts a large estate;
Let a broad stream, with golden sands,
Though all his meadows roll,
He's but a wretch, with all his lands,
Who wears a narrow soul."

The only great man, is he who excels in piety and virtue, in learning and who is rich in intellectual treasures, and who employs the talents which God has given him, and the stores of knowledge and wisdom which he has acquired, in the service, and for the benefit of his fellow men.

When we hear of a great man, a man who has distinguished himself by his learning and usefulness, we are apt to figure to ourselves something peculiarly striking in his personal appearance, and feel a kind of disappointment, when we find that the contrary is very often the case.

It is reported of the celebrated Dr. Watts, that he was one day in a mixed company, when a tall stout gentleman, having the Dr. pointed out to him, exclaimed, is that little figure the great Dr. Watts, of whom so much is said? What a poor personal appearance he makes. The Dr. overhearing, walked up to him, and it is said, repeated extempore the following lines, which now close his poem on "False Greatness."—

"Were I so tall to reach the pole,
And grasp the ocean with my span,
I must be measured by my soul,
The mind's the standard of the man."

The tall gentleman taking his hand, shook it heartily, saying I now find that fame has not belied thee, thou art indeed the Great Doctor Watts.

INTELLIGENCE.

Dr. Philipps has accepted the invitation to York Street, London; but whether he will remain in Sheffield, or remove to London, is not yet determined. It is conjectured that the intention is to hold both situations by self and deputy. Several of the Sheffield Congregation to the amount of one hundred, we are informed, have separated, and engaged a large room, in which they intend to carry on religious worship, until the measures which they contemplate for the building a New Chapel, shall be completed. They are at present assisted by some of the ministers in the neighbourhood.

TESTIMONY OF RESPECT, TO THE LATE MR. JOHN WRIGHT.

(From the "Georgetown Columbian" of July 18th, 1828.)

At a meeting of the Columbian Debating Society at the Council Chamber, Georgetown, on Tuesday Evening, July 15th, Mr. Sedley Woodward was called to the Chair, and Mr. Henry B. Robertson appointed Secretary. Mr. John B. Gray addressed the meeting as follows.

Fellow Members.

We are again assembled, but not with those lively sensations of Joy, that we were wont to feel; the gloomy countenances around me speak too well your inward feelings; for since we last met, Death has been among us, and deprived us of our head. Death! the cruel despoiler, that strikes down old and young, rich and poor; he whose superior talents and extensive acquirements excited our admiration; whose known experience was our gnide, is no more! Life's thousand trials, its pangs, its anxities, with him are over. It is said that the just, virtuous, and upright man has nothing to fear, the change is then one of joy. He has not to encounter the arrow of

envy, the web of cunning, or the snare of falsehood. But to us, my friends, the loss is serious; he was justly called the Mentor of our Society, his kindly instructions and admonitions, his earnest devotion to the cause of virtue, his anxiety for the dissemination of knowledge, and untiring zeal for the welfare of our Society, you all well remember. 'Tis done! we now can do no more than testify to his worth, and let it go forth to the world. I therefore, Mr. Chairman, offer the following resolutions.

Resolved.—That we deeply lament the loss of our late President, the venerable John Wright: in the death of him we have lost the friend and father of our Society; his amiable and benevolent dispositions, his liberal feelings and honourable principles will ever be remembered, and his memory long cherished by us.

Resolved.—That we sympathize with the family for the loss they have sustained in being deprived of the tender and affectionate husband, the kind and indulgent parent.

It was further Resolved; that a copy of the proceedings be sent to the family of the deceased, and likewise published in the Georgetown Columbian.

Which were unanimously adopted.

SEDLEY WOODWARD, Chairman.

H. B. ROBERTSON, Secretary.

POETRY.

LINES,

Suggested by the Death of a Father,

WRITTEN BY HIS SON RICHARD WRIGHT.

Is it a dream inspired by dreary night
To crown with thorns day's sunshine of delight?
No! No! 'tis not a dream:—reality,
In her impressive sober, mark'd decree,
Proclaims 'tis true! the sickness, and the pain,
Breathing's cessation, coffin, hearse and train
Of sable mourners, all and each declare
That something more than forms of empty air
Arrest the eye, and force the falling tear
Down cheeks where marks of real grief appear.
It is no dream! Death's all-resistless hand
Has ta'en one more to join his charnel band,
On which the reptile worm in riot preys,
Ere by the earth the frame itself decays;
But 'tis the body only—not the soul
Which lives, or shall live, when the dread control
Death holds o'er mortals shall have pass'd away:—
And *thou*, Oh! Death! thy power and regal sway,

Extinguish'd, as the falling meteor's light,
Shall be unknown in realms for ever bright;
While the new rais'd man, on daring wings,
Soars, high exulting; to the KING OF KINGS,
Who made at first his children of the clay
Heirs to eternity and endless day.
Oh! then ye mourners, ye who weep a friend,
A relative, a parent—ye who bend
Beneath the weight of sore affliction's rod,
Restrain your griefs; his MAKER and his GOD,
Whose power he own'd,—in whom he put his trust—
Snatch'd him from suff'ring—gave him to the dust,
And veil'd in gloom, impenetrably dark—
Can, when he willeth, call the mould'ring spark
To life, or kindle it anew to blaze,
With myriads upon myriads, in the rays
Of his own essence, in a world above,
Where only dwell peace happiness and love;
Where INTELLECT progressive joys impart—
Where kindred beings meet no more to part.
Thou, who dost mourn a partner's heavy loss—
Ye who a sire's—take refuge in the cross,
Ye who address'd him Brother—Uncle—Friend—
And ye "Columbians," faithful to the end, *
Uniting in the last sad tribute due
To one who valued all and each of you;—
Hear the great words sublimest truth imparts,
And let their import sink into your hearts:
The angel standing on the earth and sea, †
Sware by Jehovah's sacred majesty,
"There should be time no longer!" Swiftly flies
The time that is—and happy be, who wise,
And just and virtuous, lives as he would die,
And dies as he would live.—Eternity!
Eternity! Eternity! The grave
We late saw open'd, from which nought can save,
Yawns now for us—and we a twelvemonth sped,
We too may line the mansions of the dead;
Aud after that to judgment! blest the hour
When strong in truth we may defy the pow'r
Of death's approach to cause one single nerve
In fear, or doubt, or misery to swerve;
But, trusting all in God, the Great Supreme,
Lie down with hope's benignant evening beam,
Which promises a radiant morning's sun
When night is past—Eternity begun—
And freed for ever from the cloak of earth
We proudly feel a new and happier birth.

Alexandria, U. S. July 19th, 1828.

* The Members of the Columbian Debating Society (of which J. W. was President at the time of his death) testified their respect for the deceased, by attending his funeral with crape upon the arm.

† Revelation, x. 5, 6.

F. B. Wright, Printer, Castle Street, Liverpool.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right—Jesus.

No 48, NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d* DECEMBER 1, 1828.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

Curious Illustration of Hebrews xi. 37, 38.

From Harmer, vol. iv. p. 281.

They wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

The Epistle to the Hebrews describes some of the ancient sufferers for piety and virtue, as driven out from the society of their countrymen, and wandering about, like miserable outcasts, in deserts and mountains, with no better vestments than sheep-skins and goat-skins; referring, probably, to some in the beginning of the opposition made by the Maccabee family, to the attempts of the Syrian princes to force the Jewish people to abandon the religion of their forefathers, and unite with the Heathens in their idolatrous customs.* It may be acceptable to the reader to learn, that there are numbers of such miserable outcasts from common society, in that very country, to this day: not indeed on a religious account, for they are all Mohammedans; but from national prejudices, and distinctions arising from that source.

Doubdan frequently met with such in his peregrinations in that country. He sometimes calls them Moors, by which, I ap-

* 1 Maccab. ii. 28, 29, 30.—It appears by a clause in the last of those verses, that they had their cattle with them, from whence their miserable clothing seems to have been derived.

prehend, is meant the descendants from the old natives of that country, who inhabited it before the Turks (a branch of the Tartars) over-ran these parts of Asia. Some of the Arabs he met with are not described as in more elegant circumstances: these are another Eastern nation, who are attached to the living in tents, and will by no means be induced to dwell in more fixed habitations, and commonly dwell in deserts, and very retired places.

Upon leaving Jerusalem, in order to embark at Joppa, they halted some little time in a short plain, not far from the Holy City, to give time to the caravan to assemble, with which they were to travel. While waiting there, he says, "we saw six Bedouins pass along," (he meant these wandering Arabs,) "who had no other clothing than a sheep-skin on their shoulders, and a rag about their loins, emaciated and burnt up with the heat, of a horrible aspect, their eyes fiery, and each with a great club. These people are Arabs, and the greatest robbers in all the country."

He describes some of the Moors in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, who live in the village where the shepherds dwelt to whom the angel of Lord appeared according to the tradition of the country, in much the same manner. He says, "it is a poor hamlet, of twenty or twenty-five hovels." That he was informed "its inhabitants are some of the poorest and most miserable people of the country. That they saw some who looked like true savages, almost entirely naked, sun-burnt, black as a coal, and shining with the grease and oil with which they rub themselves, horrid in their countenances, with a surly, voice, with which they keep mumbling, and terrify those that are not accustomed to meet them. More especially when, upon their going to visit a certain place to which their devotion led them, they saw four poor miserable Moors running to them across the fields, huge, frightful creatures, all of them naked and sun-burnt, two armed with bows and arrows, the other two with cudgels, threattening to use them with severity, if they did not give them money."

The same scenery is exhibited in other places, and represents, excepting the violence, an accurate picture of those poor persecuted Hebrews, who wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, destitute of many of the comforts of life, emaciated, tormented with the burning heat of the sun, and afflicted with many other bitternesses in that wild and rough state.

DRUNKENNESS,

The besetting sin of Englishmen.

(*Concluded from page, 258.*)

In adverting to the reasons of intemperance, it may be also observed, that though very few at first either drink at home or frequent the public house from a love of the liquor itself, yet with some, by habitual practice, the appetite gets so depraved, the energies of the body so impaired, and so dormant the feelings of the soul, that the excitement which liquor produces seems all the life they have. A debilitated constitution refuses every remedy but that which proves its death. Trembling limbs, loss of appetite, and dejected spirits, call for the delusive glass; and they flee for relief to that which brings an untimely end. By many it is resorted to as a temporary annihilation; they drink to forget their griefs, to drown their troubles, and to obtain a respite from distracting cares. Infuriated by passion, how many are there, who, instead of endeavouring to be reconciled to an enemy, flee to the public house, and meditate revenge. Many a poor man has unhappily given way to his feelings, and through a domestic broil or a dispute with his wife, has gone to the public-house to seek enjoyment in the company of drunkards. Whatever mitigation the sin of drunkenness may receive from any of these circumstances, individuals so acting have always had cause to lament their conduct, and have found it only an aggravation of the evil. To endeavour to cure the discords of society by having recourse to such measures as these, is the very extreme of madness.

Idleness, or the want of employment often leads to excess.

The disposition of both body and mind is for action, and if a man should be so unfortunate, as to have no employment, he endeavours to remove the tediousness of his hours by sotting over his glass. Nay, even the rest which Sunday affords to mechanics, who labour hard through the week, for want of religion and a taste for mental improvement, is often prostituted to vicious indulgences, to the serious injury of their own health and the circumstances of their families. From the same cause the evening hours of many tradesmen are sacrificed at the shrine of Bacchus. Such, with contracted minds, and depraved hearts, indifferent to science and literature, and strangers to the multifarious plans of doing good among their fellow creatures, seem elated with the social bottle, as the best plan of trifling away their hours, and giving celerity to the wheels of time, which hangs so heavily on their hands. How many have been marked by the curse of an independancy! Having no necessity for labour, no impulse for exertion, they have given themselves up to drinking and gaming and sensual excesses. Like the infidel Epicures of old, in their conduct, they say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

Amongst the causes of the prevalency of drunkenness I may mention the *deficiency of the means* used *to prevent it*. Prevention is the best cure, and those who use no means to prevent an evil, may justly be considered as aiding its production. It is true that disorderly drunkards, and publicans keeping disorderly houses are sometimes punished with a fine; but this, whilst it may promote outward decorum, scarcely ever affects the principles of the mind. It is also true, that on a Sunday persons are employed to clear the public houses during the time of divine service, but which, in the evening exhibit scenes that are a disgrace to a civilized country. But what does this interference amount to? There is frequently the most perfect good will between the visitors and the visited; in them and in their looks, they recognise their friends. This also, at best, is but coercion; it carries no conviction to the conscience, no change in the will and affections of the mind. We shall be told that Sermons are

preached; true, but instead of constantly inveighing against this and every other prevailing vice, which are making the most desperate inroads upon society, and threatening the very extinction of social happiness, instead of unveiling the depths of wickedness, and bringing to light the carousing excesses of the sensualist with a particularity that could not be mistaken, regardless of consequences; instead of this, if the enormity of sin be mentioned, it is in that general way that gives but little uneasiness; and if repentance be urged, it is often with those cautions which tend to neutralize its effects. But the worst of all is, that *practical* religion is thrown into the shade, and abstruse mysteries are made the constant topics of declamation. Forgetting the overspreading increase of *moral* heresy, Divines are for ever labouring to keep the people safe from the heresy of mere opinion. Regardless of the common foe of man, they are everlastingly contending for the orthodoxy of their opinions, and impugning those of others. Instead of making charity, benevolence, honesty, and every personal and practical virtue—instead of making love to God and love to man the essentials of religion, it is mostly made to consist of doctrinal opinions and a regular attendance at a place of worship; it is no wonder, therefore, that drunkenness can raise its daring front, and defy the efforts of an opposition so feeble as this. Yes, Sermons are preached, but where and to whom? In splendid edifices, decked with fashionable attractions, and frequented by few but the comparatively wealthy. The demoralized, the depraved drunkards, are not to be found here; indeed, for reasons the most obvious, very few really poor attend these places. Whilst millions are drawn every year from the resources of the nation for the prevention of crime, the ministers of religion who are employed; never fairly come in contact with it; they miss their mark, they fight at a distance. Like their great exampler, they should mix with society; they should seek out the haunts of wickedness and vice—in cellars, in houses, in prisons, in factories, in public grounds; they should mark every individual notorious for drinking, whether rich or poor, and seek the first opportunity

of reasoning with them of temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come. In fact, they should be abroad in the world, and as spiritual watchmen, should be teaching and warning the ungodly night and day; this might be done by familiar discourse the most effectually, without either study, ceremony, or sermon. By a judicious management of his time, a minister might come in contact with hundreds of dissipated characters every week, whom, on the present plan, he will never see till that day when their blood may be required at his hand. In examining the causes of the increase of crime, I am confident they will never be discovered, without taking into account the character of the clergy and their present system of instruction.

If we proceed to judge of the sin of drunkenness by its *effects*, we cannot but deplore it as the most injurious, the most debasing, the most destructive vice that ever threw its enchanting wand over rational society. It is decidedly injurious both to body and mind. Physicians all agree that intemperance has a direct tendency to destroy health, and shorten life; fevers, dropsies, consumptions, gout, palsy, and apoplexy, are generally its effects; besides numerous misfortunes, accidents, and sudden deaths which happen to persons when intoxicated with liquor. The long-lived have generally been noted for temperance and regular habits; and if the tombstones of untimely deaths could tell the cause, what numbers would appear to have been self-murders by the intoxicating draught. The constitutional vigour of many is destroyed, so that they always feel half dead till they get the excitement of the glass. Were it not for the wise provision of the Almighty in bestowing upon nature a repelling power, many would have destroyed themselves, were it possible a thousand times. Oh, the wanton attacks of brutal man to disorganize and destroy that harmonious frame which is so wonderfully and fearfully made! Nature, indeed, more sympathetic in her feelings, struggles for resistance, ejects the poison and saves the life. Drink, however, has slain its thousands; how many valuable lives have been sacrificed to liquor; and how many could we point at as they pass the street, whose in-

temperate habits have brought them to the verge of the grave; how many publicans, besides enticing others, have been carried away; and how easily might we predict the fate of many others who are now living. Excessive drinking, also, blinds the intellect, destroys the memory, stupifies the conscience, corrupts the heart, and debases every power of the mind. The genius of youth becomes blasted, the mental vigour of manhood enervated, the social affections of the heart destroyed, and brutish ignorance, stupidity, and sottish vulgarity characterize the man. Behold the image of God changed into an idiot, a beast, a fiend. From such depravity of mind, may be expected depravity of manners, and hence, swearing, brawling, fighting, lewdness, and lasciviousness mark the character. Reason destroyed, the man becomes a prey to his sensual appetites, and gratifies them to his own ruin. Lost to all sense of honour or honesty, he becomes suspected by all around him, and no sooner deserves, than he obtains, a character for infamy. Drunkenness, as we have said, is the prolific source of crime, and I have seldom known a notorious character, but he was given to drinking. "I have found," says Judge Hale, "that if the murders and manslaughters, the burglaries and robberies, the riots and tumults, the adulteries, fornications, rapes, and other great enormities that have happened, were divided into five parts, four of them are the issues and product of excessive drinking, and of tavern or ale-house meetings."

We shall resume this subject in our next. In which the consequences of drunkenness will be shown, as they affect the property of families—prove the ruin of trade, and reduces those to want, who had it not been for this worse than beastly vice, might have lived with honour, reputation and comfort in the world. Let the reader lay these things seriously to heart.

QUERY.

In what sense are we to understand Christ, under the character of a shepherd, laying down his life for the sheep?

ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION OF ENGLAND.

(From a Pamphlet first printed 1733.*)*

(Concluded from our last.)

Having mentioned cathedral deans, I shall here beg leave to give a specimen of the several parts or members whereof the cathedratic choir or body is usually composed; which, taking our pattern from that at St Paul's, stands thus:

1 Bishop, 1 dean, 1 subdean, 1 præcentor, 1 chancellor, who has under him divers scribes, clerks and officers; 1 treasurer, who has an officer called a sacrist or sacristan for a coadjutor, and this sacrist has 3 or 4 attendants called viergers. There are also 5 achdeacons, 30 prebendaries, 12 petty canons, 6 or 8 vicars choral, and about 24 choristers and singing boys, besides other officers and attendants: the whole number of officers and attendants in this and other cathedrals amounting to about 150, and in some, as I am informed, to near 200.

And if any person is desirous to know the several procurations, synodals, pensions, payments and perquisites appropriated to each of the above-mentioned officers within the diocese of London; let him peruse Mr. Newcourt's *Repertorium Cononicum*, Vol. I. fol. 58, 102, &c. And by an account taken from the second volume of that Book, I find that, in the single County of Essex, there is yearly paid to the bishops and archdeacons, in procurations, pensions, and synodals only, about 500*l.* per annum.

And upon the whole account, which may easily be deduced from the foregoing view and specimen, I think it will evidently appear, that the number of spiritual officers and attendants belonging to archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, and cathedral deans only, will amount to more than 20,000 persons besides preaching ministers. And that these receive for their maintainance one with another, at least 40*l.* a man yearly, which will amount to at least eight hundred thousand pounds per annum. A surprising sum! and when we consider that many of those

officers instead of forty pounds per annum, do make two, three, or four hundred pounds per annum, by their ecclesiastical employments, I conceive the above computation may well be extended to ten thousand pounds per annum: all which is extorted and squeezed out of the people's purses, merely to support ecclesiastical power and jurisdiction.

We may here further observe, that, besides the spiritual jurisdiction above-mentioned, some of our bishops (as Durham, Ely, &c.) have palatine jurisdiction annexed to their bishopricks, which includes in itself a double species of sovereign power, (i. e. temporal and spiritual) within the limits of their respective jurisdictions. And accordingly, in pursuance, and for the more effectual execution of this *partie per pale* sovereign power, they have their supreme courts both temporal and spiritual, from whence no appeal lies, but to the bishop himself. He (the bishop) being there (in Durham) said to be supreme Lord and head, both in spirituals and temporals; insomuch as the practisers in those courts are said to have a maxim, *Quod Brevia Domini Regis non currunt in Provincia Dunelmensi, quia Episcopus ibidem facit Vicecomitem.* It being well known that the bishop there, by virtue of his own letters patent and grants, doth constitute all judges, sheriffs, officers, &c. who, by virtue of such grants, do (exclusive of the king and his royal prerogative) judge and determine of the lives, liberties, and properties of such of the king's subjects as happen to live or reside within the limits of that jurisdiction.

'Tis also under pretence of this double-bodied jurisdiction, that, in that diocese of Durham, they usually extort vast sums of money yearly, from such as they there call the Bishop's subjects; and by a peculiar artifice (which will always be practised where both the temporal and spiritual authority concur in the same person) the practisers in both those courts (i. e. the proctors and the attorneys) do so play the game into each other's hands, that the poor client is often forced to bear the rapines and plunderings of both jurisdictions. For let the nature of the cause be either spiritual or temporal, the temporal as well as

spiritual courts are frequently employed to support the judgments of either. An outlawry there being the natural consequence of an excommunication, as an excommunication generally follows that of an outlawry; and by this method is the *Summus Jus* of ecclesiastical jurisdiction there perfected.

We shall probably return to this subject again. In the mean time we recommend our readers to consider how much is paid for the support of a church called Apostolical and Evangelical. Paul and Peter certainly had no such revenues, as now flow into the coffers of our ecclesiastical rulers. But there is a considerable difference in their situations and characters. The Evangelists were teachers, our Bishops are Lords. The Apostles were the ministers of Christ, our Clergy are christian recipients, to whom the body, maintaining the christian name, minister, not only out of their abundance, but also from their hard earnings, and give of their children's bread to those who call themselves spiritual fathers! *Ed.*

POPULAR RELIGIOUS ERRORS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

Sir,

That errors in our religious belief ought to be avoided as much as possible, must be obvious to every enlightened and well disposed mind, nevertheless it will be evident, that religious dogmatists may entertain errors that are not equally important in their effects upon the christian character.

That many of the superstitious follies of the Church of Rome, as well as the fanciful conceits of fanaticism, are in themselves comparatively harmless, no one can doubt; but when the articles of any religious system require the prostration of the rational faculties of man, in order to prepare him for their adoption, it lays the mind open to every species of mental delusion, which interested and cunning men can devise. Perhaps one of the most influential errors in the Christian Church is the Doctrine of the Trinity, as it not only requires a prostration of our rational powers, and an implicit belief in the assertions of its teachers, but it requires an implicit belief in several other articles of faith, to make it apparently correspond to the harmony of the gospel, and work well for the purposes of religious delusion.

Thus the doctrines of Original sin, Imputed Righteousness, and Election, are necessary parts of our popular scheme of christian salvation, although they chiefly rest on passages of scripture that had a special reference to the Jewish and Gentile nations, at the time they were promulgated, and cannot be correctly applied to the present state of the christian world. Respecting Original Sin, or the Fall of Man, I have already given you my opinion, and I do not

hesitate to say, from my own knowledge, that in many instances the doctrine of Imputed Righteousness has a baneful effect upon the lives of professing christians.

What disgraceful and anomalous characters do we meet with among the zealous professors of the christian faith, men who are base and mean in all their dealings, and yet openly boast of their acceptance with God, by the mystical influence of an incomprehensible faith, founded on perverted passages of scripture. Abounding as the gospels do with many exhortations from the mouth of Jesus, to induce his followers to become personally righteous, in order to obtain the favour of his Heavenly Father, it is a matter of regret and surprise, how many teachers of the gospel can so far pervert the scriptures of truth, as to inculcate the doctrine, that a belief in certain mystical notions about Imputed Righteousness, is of more importance, as touching our salvation, than that personal righteousness which Jesus laboured so much to establish among his faithful disciples. The great importance of a mystical faith, and the comparatively little importance of personal righteousness, have been argued from the unqualified condemnation which Christ passed upon the righteousness of the Pharisees; but woe unto those teachers who thus pervert the plain truths of the gospel, to establish their own fanciful notions; for they must know that it was not the personal righteousness of the Pharisees which Jesus condemned, but that vile hypocrisy and deceit, that put on the outward form of sanctity while the heart remained base and wicked, therefore these passages which condemn the righteousness of the Pharisees do not apply to the sincere in heart, but only to our modern saintly looking hypocrites, who are ever strenuous for all the outward forms and ceremonies of religion, while they are strangers to justice and mercy in all their dealings.

To such christians as crucify their master again, by deeds of injustice, the doctrine of Imputed Righteousness is of the utmost importance, for without some such salvo, or a complete violation of their common sense, they must stand self-condemned, and feel that the most decisive and strongest declarations of the scriptures are leveled against their hypocrisy.

That the writings of Paul have been the chief source of the mystification, which attends our popular dogmas of faith, is too obvious to require any further proof, than a simple comparison between the two; but it should be remembered, that Paul was brought up among that sect called Pharisees, and that he early imbibed that quibbling spirit, which they substituted for true religion, he does not deny, therefore when he became a convert to the plain doctrines of Jesus, he had to contend in a special manner with his deluded country men, about certain useless points of belief, and it was these disputations that introduced into his writings those sayings, which Peter said were hard to be understood, and which some of the early disciples did wrest to their own destruction, and which a cunning priesthood never lost sight of, as they ever found those mystical notions most influential in giving them a complete ascendancy over the minds of the unsuspecting multitudes.

That our present popular, though erroneous, views of religion would quickly be corrected, if the plain good sense of mankind were not shackled by a designing priesthood, must be evident from the steps which are uniformly taken to perpetuate these religious errors; for in order to make the unsuspecting multitude swallow their various mixtures of incomprehensibles, they associate the strong denunciations of scripture against wilful sinners, with these intellectual medleys; and unblushingly tell their simple followers, that these awful denunciations are equally applicable to them, if they do not assent to their incomprehensible doctrines. Having thus awakened their fears, and confused their understandings, they cunningly tell them that the mental struggle, under which they labour is the workings of the holy spirit, and a manifestation they are amongst the elect, and these doctrines the most inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel, have been forced upon the world as the genuine doctrines of the scripture; but thanks to the intellectual improvement of the age, and the purifying spirit of the gospel, we are about to see pure and undefiled religion burst through those clouds of error, which have so long darkened and deformed its glorious character, and reappear in all its genuine simplicity.

Had our modern Pharisees, or Paulites, for they have little to do with the plain doctrines of Jesus, read the gospels and the Apostle James, with the same attention, they in all probability have done the convenient, but equivocal writings of Paul, they would have never laid the mistaken unction of Imputed Righteousness to their souls; they would have clearly seen that personal righteousness alone can recommend them to that mercy, which our Heavenly Father has promised to all his sincerely repenting children. That this plain and unequivocal doctrine was uniformly taught by Jesus, the gospels will abundantly testify; and whenever it is enforced with honest sincerity, it must produce the happiest effect on the christian character.

Still steadfast in the cause of truth, I remain, yours in goodwill, and I trust in christian charity.

PHILO JAMES.

Wavertree, November 15th, 1823.

WANT OF ZEAL AMONG UNITARIANS.

Indeed! is't true?
Most veritable; therefore look to't well.
Then would to heaven I had never seen it.

SHAKESPEARE.

IN what portion of our religious body is that zeal which is becoming the truly evangelical doctrines we advocate, to be found? Is it with the poor, or the rich, or with both of these

classes? Is it with men on the other, or on this side the Atlantic, in the north, the south, the east, or the west of Britain? Where is it to be found, shewing itself to be true, in our regular attendance upon religious worship; in our open avowal and manly defence of our principles; in the union of our hands and hearts to promote our cause; in our pecuniary and personal support of societies among us for sending Missionaries and Tracts to found religion as it is in Jesus, among those who have been accustomed to believe that they see it in the forms of orthodoxy, and read it in the pages of the Common Prayer Book; a book, by the way, which numbers use, but which none explain agreeably either to common sense, or the plain letter of sacred writ? Where is a firm adherence to the cause which we believe to be that cause which Jesus came to establish upon earth, which his apostles maintained and defended unto death; and which is in the sacred books clear to every unprejudiced eye, and intelligible to every attentive mind? If facts must be the answer to the question, there is in our societies generally, wealth, and it may be presumed that we are not behind our brethren in the "march of intellect;" but, there is a lack of that truly apostolic zeal which animated those worthies, Lindsey, Priestley, &c. "in their great work of duty and pious benevolence." There is, I repeat it little of that energy of that ardent desire for the spread of truth; little of that indefatigable spirit, which characterized the founders of our faith in prosperity, as well as adversity, under the scorn of the bigot, as well as the persecution of the powerful. There is but little of this spirit among us; for, while in the one place, we are seeking ease and soothing words in the avoidance of controversy; in another, we are endeavouring to suit the tastes of men of another faith, and justify our own conduct as *professors* of dissent, by weighing all sayings on this subject in an equal balance; while in one place, we are paying a minister to address not us, but our seats; in another, we are leaving the young of our poor without any religious provision, either through the means of a Sunday school, or, the distribution of books; while in one place the minister has a rich congregation, and a bare subsistence; in another, though we meet under the same roof for the worship of the same being, we are seen exchanging the look of friendship, as frequently, as we exchange our purses, and giving to one another the hand of fellowship and christian brotherhood, as often as we go to Rome, to pay the Pope for a remission of our manifold sins. This is not all. While in one place, there are a few of us who seek to know the strength or weakness of our societies for the promulgation of our opinions; in another, there are many of us to whom it appears less expensive, and much more profitable, to spend our money in popular and frivolous amusements, than

purchase one, even one, of the Monthly Publications of our body. Shame be unto us! Who can see these things and not say, that while in America, in Ireland, and in some cases in England, Unitarianism is supported with a proper and praiseworthy spirit: that there are some of us who call ourselves Unitarians, who have neither felt the truth of our principles in our hearts, nor acted as it becomes those who profess to be the followers of Jesus the Saviour and friend of all mankind? Who, I say, can see this indifference, and say that this is a spirit, this is conduct, which ought to be manifested by *us* who blame the priests of old for suppressing knowledge; and who will not fail to answer, if questioned, that it is by a fair examination of the sacred writings, that the will of God is to be known, and that when it is known in truth as it is in Jesus, all unjust restraint upon the human mind will be removed, and every man allowed to offer the worship and serve the God dearest to his heart, and most congenial with his views of a creator and universal parent? Glad should I be to see in us more active zeal for the promotion of our religion; then, we might hail the approach of an era, when the hands of Unitarian Christians of the north, and the south, the east and the west, will be engaged in the diffusion of the truths which they advocate, and in the consistent discharge of their duty as dissenters from those who act more from custom, than religious principle.

As an amendment it is however not desirous that we profess such zeal as when

> "Oyster women lock'd their fish up
> "And trudg'd away to cry no bishop;

When "Instead of kitchen stuff some cry
"A gospel-preaching ministry;"

but, that we "have zeal according to knowledge," well founded, directed to the attainment of proper objects, and maintained from a real love for christianity, and from an ardent desire to establish the kingdom of righteousness among us. This is the zeal we want, and which, if Unitarianism is embraced in truth and sincerity it will give us; for its doctrines are those of pure christianity, appealing to the best affections of the heart; for love to our Heavenly Father who watches over us with tenderness, and for attachment to Jesus, who hath laboured and suffered for our good; "therefore if true gratitude for the blessings" of God through Jesus Christ, "finds its way into our bosoms, it must be accompanied by a desire to deserve them; and this desire will be the same as a determination to discharge our duty, as it is laid down to us in the gospel." If, moreover, we have any sympathy for the situation of others, if we have any care either for our own, or for the souls of our fellow men, we shall cease to be

indifferent, and to be the enemies of our own desires, to give Unitarianism a prominent place in our towns, and villages, and cottages of the poor. Let us compare our present condition with what it ought to be, and we shall find, I think, that we are far from being the true soldiers of the great captain of our salvation, who went forth "conquering and to conquer."

X.

POETRY.

ODE TO CHARITY.

Say, Charity, thou heaven-born maid,
Where have thy wandering footsteps stray'd,
Oh! hast thou sought the silent shade,
Or lonely cell!
Ah! no! thou gently deign'st to meet
Thy sister Pity in the street;
There ye consent, with aspect sweet,
With Man to dwell.

How oft the wretched vagrant train,
Though doom'd to feel keen want or pain,
Pour out the supplication vain
To some hard heart;
Till thou fair Maid, with magic wand,
Doth gently touch the niggard hand,
And pity's tears he can't withstand,
So yields a part.

Should stern misfortune's child pass by,
The pampered son of luxury
Would proudly cast a scornful eye,
Nor drop a tear,
Till thou attack his soul of steel,
Then he, who ne'er was known to feel,
Will join a brother's woes to heal,
With heart sincere.

Behold yon little orphan boy,
Late father's hope and mother's joy,
Playing unconscious with its toy,
Nor dreams of ill;
His little face with nature's smile,
As free from care, as free from guile,
A stranger to each artful wile,
Looks happy still.

Oh! Maid divine, his steps attend,
To virtue's ways his actions bend,
And raise him up some generous friend,
With pow'r and will,

His youthful innocence to guide,
When strong temptation draws aside
On pleasure's slippery path to slide
Down vice's hill.

Yon widowed fair, whose pallid cheek
And thoughtful eye her sorrows speak,
Who feels with resignation meek
Her loss severe;
Oh, peerless Maid, thy pow'r exert,
To cheer her drooping broken heart,
And to repel affliction's dart
By friendship's tear.

If one, in some ill-fated hour,
Yield to temptation's baneful power
When punishment and ruin low'r,
Whisper to man:
"Frail mortal, hear soft pity's call,
Lest he who stand, perchance to fall;
Thy brother's crimes and failings all,
In mercy scan."

When soaring genius prostrate lies,
And mammon's sordid sons despise
The man whose worth they ought to prize,
Of talents rare;
A mind of nature's finest mould,
More precious than their paltry gold,
Which the Almighty's works unfold,
So "matchless fair."

Oh! heavenly Maid, his sorrows heal,
Dispose some kindred mind to feel,
Let sympathetic fervor steal,
O'er icy hearts;
Till fallen genius rear his head,
His griefs o'erpast, his miseries fled,
And hope's bright cheering influence spread,
A balm imparts.

Oh may thy rays still brighter glow,
Thy streamlets like a current flow,
Till universal love below
To all extend;
This will the captive's chains release,
Make man with man reside in peace,
Till war her cruel havoc cease,
And discord end.

ELVIRA.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Rules and maxims, to live happy, in our next.—We thank our friend for the Essay on Benevolence.—We shall attend to the hint of a "Constant Reader."

F. B. Wright, Printer, Castle Street, Liverpool.

GTU Library
3 2400 00269 8201